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Michael Wood on Norman Rush

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The Nation.

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Humanitarian Intervention:

A FORUM

When is it humanitarian?

When is it aggression?

Is regime change justified?

Who decides?

What are the nonviolent alternatives?

What should be the role of the United Nations?

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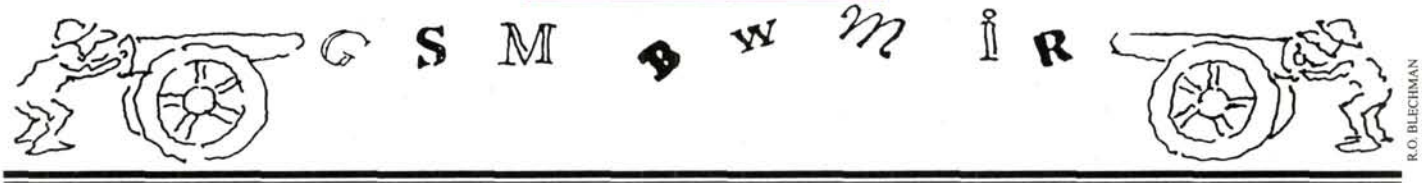

R.O. BLECHMAN

'Ugly Tactics Make for Ugly People'

New York City

■ Eric Alterman is right to chide those "liberals" who would use low tricks to smear the innocent, whatever politics the victim may endorse. The world would surely be a better place if all of us agreed that "ugly tactics make for ugly people." And so that issue of *The Nation* would have been a better magazine without that column by Alterman, who has himself deployed the very tactics he purports to loathe. His heated testimony on John Fund's behalf is nothing but a hatchet job on Morgan Pillsbury, whose case he has completely misreported ["Stop the Presses," June 2].

Alterman asserts that there's no truth in Pillsbury's account: that she's insane ("deeply disturbed"), and that those who claim to buy her story are mere lefty opportunists, "eager to use her" to advance the Cause. For these contentions he has offered not a wisp of evidence but simply ridicules the plaintiff's claims by treating them with lots of manly irony. "Naturally," he writes, "it was fun to imagine, after he got himself arrested last year, that Fund was really a monster who had walked out on a planned marriage with his girlfriend and then beat her up—the dastardly deeds of which he was publicly accused in 2001." Then there was "the rumor"—savored by Fund's "ill-wishers"—that the gentleman in question "had long ago had an affair with the woman's mother, and knocked up both of them."

The story is a lurid one, but that alone does not disprove it (or make it "fun to imagine"). Yet Alterman rejects it—because Fund is "likely not the kind of guy who pretends to want to marry women and then beats them up." The evidence? "I knew Fund a bit from our time together at MSNBC," and "he always struck me as a perfect gentleman." On the other hand, "Pillsbury and her mother…both struck me as 'a little bit nutty,' to borrow [David] Brock's nefarious phrase." The evidence? There isn't any. Alterman had never talked to Pillsbury when he first cast her as unstable (in a prior *Nation* column), and has to this day never met, talked to or corresponded with her mother. He did hear from the daughter *after* that first column appeared, when she e-mailed him to set the record straight and ask for a retraction. He apologized, persuaded her to drop the issue—and went on to repeat Fund's story in his book. (She then posted their exchange on her website, www.ruthlesspeople.com.) And now he has repeated it once more, and still without explaining why those women "struck" him as "a little bit nutty."

In this third version Alterman intensifies the slander with a crude pastiche of bits from certain "documents" conveyed to him by "a close friend" of the defendant. He quotes "a signed affidavit" in which Pillsbury denies it all and jeers at her claim that it was written with Fund looming over her, "fist at the ready," dictating every word. (I've seen a copy of that "affidavit," which was clearly penned under duress.) As if to bolster that "confession," Alterman then quotes "a letter to the *Wall Street Journal*" in which Pillsbury allegedly describes herself as tending toward delusion. The only evident delusion here, however, is that letter, which is either nonexistent or a forgery, because the *Journal* never published one. (Pillsbury did once write a personal letter to the *Journal*'s Paul Gigot—to tell him Fund was beating her.) Alterman then offers up a dubious snippet of "a deposition" in which Pillsbury appears to cast herself as a demented liar. Since there's no context given, it's impossible to tell what she really meant—nor is that statement something we might check, since it pertains not to this case at all but to her mother's acrimonious divorce in California. That deposition isn't publicly available, as it was never certified or filed (because the parties settled out of court), and so it isn't such a useful "document."

Into this watery concoction Alterman portentously inserts the fact that Pillsbury "was born Carolyn Anne Barteaux," and yet "now goes by Morgan Francis Pillsbury." What Alterman implies here is some creepy kind of double life—split personality? secret agent for "the left"?—and yet Pillsbury's reason for that change of name is more mundane, and sadder. She dropped "Barteaux," she and her mother say, because that was the surname of her biological father—an abuser whom both women have been hiding from for years.

Thus Alterman has no basis for his curt dismissal of the plaintiff in this case. On the other hand, she has clear evidence—which I have seen—for her contentions, and it refutes the smears by Fund and Alterman (who also could have seen it if he'd wanted to). "When I contacted Pillsbury by e-mail to ask her about these documents, she insisted that the two *had* planned to marry." And so they had, unless the parties' many e-mails on the subject, and the public announcement of their plans, are all a brilliant forgery by Fund's invisible tormentor(s). "She professed not to know that the assault charges against Fund had been dropped, claiming the DA has not been clear with her and that the case was 'grossly mishandled.'" First of all, the battery charges against Fund have *not* been dropped in Jersey City, where the case is pending. As to the case here in Manhattan, Pillsbury *has* had trouble getting information from the DA's office—which does appear to have "mishandled" her complaint. Her bruises didn't look *that* bad, she claims they said to her. And now we learn that the DA's office didn't merely drop the charges but also promptly sealed the case—a move that argues an undue protectiveness toward Fund. And as for her other claims—her pregnancies by Fund, his prior involvement with her mother—Pillsbury also has persuasive evidence, while Fund and Alterman have none at all.

Now, it is true that Pillsbury was once in therapy. But even if she'd done time in a padded cell, she'd be a lot more credible than the defendant. Never mind asking "Who Framed John Fund?"—a question as preposterous as "Who promoted Peress?" or "Who lost China?" (Fund thinks he's been "framed" by Sidney Blumenthal, whom he regards as Pillsbury's Svengali.) It is more appropriate to ask, "Who *is* John Fund?" He started as a gofer for Bob Novak, and then went on to join the *Journal* team that drove Vince Foster to his death (which left Fund gleeful). In league with David Horowitz, Ann Coulter and Matt Drudge, Fund spent the 1990s tartly moralizing about Bill Clinton's private life and was the author of the tale that Blumenthal was an incorrigible wife-beater. ("Fund denies this," Alterman reports, downplaying the abundant evidence in Blumenthal's *The Clinton Wars* and other sources.) Having trashed the Democrats throughout the Clinton years, Fund continued agitating for Team Bush. He's now serving as a commentator on the Christian Broadcasting Network, singing the praises of this President and all his wars.

In short, John Fund is not, as Alterman asserts, a "right-wing journalist" but a dedicated far-right propagandist. We therefore ought to take his every utterance with a pound of salt—because such ardent partisans are apt to be maliciously projective, assailing others for the sins that they commit themselves (cf. Bill Bennett, Matt Drudge, Newt Gingrich, Andrew Sullivan et al.). Thus Fund, the batterer of women, smeared Blumenthal as a wife-batterer, and preached against the lustful Democrats even as his own sex life was easily as varied as Bill Clinton's (or Gary Condit's). To work his slanders, Fund required no evidence, and he deploys none now, as he accuses Morgan Pillsbury of victimizing *him*, insisting that *she* makes thing up, *she* deals in smears, *she's* "deeply disturbed" and so on. It's a self-serving tactic (or delusion) that the right routinely uses on its enemies, and that abusive men have often used to soil the reputations of those women whom they've raped, stalked, threatened, beaten black and blue.

It is therefore especially disheartening to see *The Nation* aiding Fund by letting Alterman

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EDITORIALS

Affirmative Action Lives

In one of its most important cases in decades, the Supreme Court on June 23 upheld the prerogative of colleges and universities to give preferences to members of minority groups in admissions. The Court was closely divided; it upheld the University of Michigan Law School's affirmative-action policy by a 5-to-4 vote while invalidating the university's undergraduate affirmative-action program by a 6-to-3 vote. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was the swing vote, underscoring, if it needed underscoring, the importance of future appointments to the Court.

The Court's divisions masked what was at bottom virtually a complete victory for affirmative-action proponents. The majority ruled that "diversity" is a compelling state interest, justifying the express consideration of race in the higher-education setting. Justice O'Connor, who wrote the majority opinion, noted that racial diversity is critically important not only for its benefits to the learning process but also because universities and colleges are the stepping stones to leadership positions in our society. In her words, "in order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity." And the Court upheld an affirmative-action program that gave distinct advantages to African-American, Hispanic and Native American applicants.

The Court struck down the undergraduate program because it failed to afford an individualized consideration to all applicants. The university applied an across-the-board twenty-point boost to all underrepresented minority applicants, which had the effect of insuring the admission of virtually every qualified minority applicant. This decision will pose a challenge to larger institutions that have relied heavily on numerical factors, because it requires individualized treatment if race is to be considered. But that is a small price to pay for preserving access to colleges and universities for members of disadvantaged groups.

The victory for affirmative action does not dispel the fact that today's Supreme Court is a far-right institution. Only two Justices—David Souter and Ruth Bader Ginsburg—took the position that we advocate, namely, that programs that give an advantage to members of minority groups should not be subject to the same heightened suspicion that the Court applies to laws that disadvantage minorities. A solid majority still purports to take a colorblind view of the equal protection clause, a view hopelessly out of touch with the fact that considering a minority applicant's race as a positive factor in admissions in the interest of diversity or integration is entirely different from holding a minority applicant's race against her. But today's decision, the first in which a majority of the Court has upheld an affirmative-action policy under strict scrutiny, reveals that even those who profess to believe in colorblindness recognize that in our society, as the Court put it, "race unfortunately still matters."

Justice O'Connor closed her opinion by noting that there should be no need for affirmative action twenty-five years from now. We'll see. If her hope has any chance of fruition, however, it will first require a truly radical commitment to remedying the gulf in resources and opportunities between white and black, rich and poor, that afflicts every segment of this nation. And right now the governing party is doing all in its power to widen, not to bridge, that gulf.

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COMMENT

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Diversity Over Justice

In the current political climate, the Supreme Court's decision upholding the right of colleges and universities to take race into account in admissions must be considered a victory for those committed to racial justice. Celebration, however, should be tempered by some unpleasant facts about American history and society, and the Court itself.

When first developed in the 1960s, affirmative action formed part of a far broader program for attacking both poverty and racial inequality, including a domestic Marshall Plan to reverse urban decay and create jobs, and government action to end housing segregation and drastically improve urban public education. This program has virtually vanished. Affirmative action, the one surviving element, must be defended, but with no illusions that it alone can adequately address the enduring legacy of 250 years of slavery and a century of Jim Crow. In the long run, the Court's decision will be cause for cheer only if it serves to reinvigorate a broader struggle for racial equality.

Among the Justices, only Ruth Bader Ginsburg seemed willing to face the extent of inequality in America. Her powerful dissent in the undergraduate case forthrightly stated what should be obvious—that race still matters enormously in housing, healthcare, income, schooling and other areas of American life. Ginsburg directly attacked the conservative sophistry that, under the rallying cry of "colorblindness," conflates affirmative action with past efforts to stigmatize minorities. Programs designed to create greater equality, she writes, cannot be equated with "policies of oppression." Her dissent marks Ginsburg's emergence as an uncompromising voice of liberalism on the Court, something absent since the departure of Thurgood Marshall and William Brennan.

Partly because they assumed, correctly, that Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, a strong critic of the idea of "societal racism," would turn out to be the swing vote in a 5-to-4 decision, Michigan's lawyers decided to emphasize not persistent racial inequality but the educational value of racial diversity. The diversity argument presents affirmative action not as a program that primarily aids minorities but as one that improves the educational environment, a more politically palatable case. But it runs the risk of suggesting that access for nonwhite students is desirable mainly because it enhances the educational experience of whites by exposing them to classmates from different backgrounds. Diversity is undoubtedly a worthy goal. But a single-minded focus on diversity deflects attention from the need to combat the numerous inequalities to which Ginsburg referred.

Most nonwhite students do not attend elite colleges and professional schools that feed the upper echelons of society but public two- and four-year ones. As a recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* makes clear, the greatest threat to educational diversity today arises from the severe cutbacks in public funding imposed on these institutions by cash-strapped state governments. Tuition is rising rapidly, and scholarships are being reduced. A significant drop in minority enrollment will inevitably follow.

O'Connor's opinion suggests that she was strongly influenced by briefs on behalf of affirmative action filed by major corporate

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executives and retired military officers. They argued that the United States cannot compete in today's global economy, or maintain an effective military, without racially diverse business and military leaders. This argument has a historical precedent. Half a century ago, when *Brown v. Board of Education* was before the Court, the Eisenhower Administration urged the Justices to consider segregation's effect on the world standing of the United States in the cold war. People of other nations, it declared, "cannot understand how such a practice can exist in a country which professes to be a staunch supporter of freedom, justice, and democracy."

Once again, the international interests of the United States have prompted steps toward greater racial equality at home. The result should be applauded. But we should not lose sight of the fact that corporate globalization has had a devastating impact on the black working class by hastening deindustrialization, and that military service offers many nonwhites the opportunity to advance socially only by taking part in wars abroad. It is a sign of the times that it required an appeal to the demands of globalization and an imperial foreign policy to persuade the Court to uphold affirmative action in higher education. ERIC FONER

Eric Foner, a Columbia history professor, was an expert witness in Grutter v. Bollinger, *the University of Michigan law school case.*

Moving on Media Reform

It's no secret that Washington has a limited interest in the public interest these days. So the Senate Commerce Committee's vote to restore media-ownership controls that were lifted on June 2 by the Federal Communications Commission was indeed remarkable. All the more remarkable was the willingness of the committee to back legislation that actually encourages the FCC to weigh measures to strengthen restrictions on media consolidation and monopoly.

What gives? Are Republican stalwarts like Alaska's Ted Stevens and Mississippi's Trent Lott turning into the trustbusters of the twenty-first century? Don't bet on it. Media reform, the issue almost no one in Washington took seriously a year ago, is on the agenda because hundreds of thousands of Americans put it there by flooding first the FCC and then Congress with their outrage at regulatory machinations designed to let Big Media get even bigger. And as long as the people keep complaining, the issue will have bipartisan legs.

That's because, when issues that involve the inner workings of democracy are put on the table, traditional political seating charts get tossed. Just as campaign-finance-reform initiatives of the mid-1990s attracted support from unexpected Congressional allies—some acting from real concern for democracy, some from self-interested concern about whether they could hold their own as fundraisers—so dozens of members of both parties are signing on to various Congressional initiatives that seek to defend diversity, competition and local control of the media.

Some are battered Republican moderates like Maine Senator Olympia Snowe and Iowa Representative Jim Leach, who worry just as much as progressive Democrats like North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan and New York Representative Maurice Hinchey about the right-wing takeover of talk-radio and cable TV channels and the damage done to the national discourse when too much control of media ends up in too few hands.

But an assessment of the newfound Congressional interest in media ownership must take in another factor: the growing awareness of senators and representatives that Big Media has little interest in what they do. Speaking at a Future of Music Coalition conference, Florida Representative Mark Foley, a Republican rising star, complained that when he got started in politics he was covered by at least five Palm Beach–area radio stations. Today, Foley says, he feels lucky if one station reports on him or the issues he's working on. And TV is worse than radio. As Commerce Committee chair John McCain writes, "When it comes to the important public service of covering political campaigns, broadcast television has been increasingly missing in action."

A study by the Norman Lear Center Local News Archive found that over half of local news reports contained no political coverage in the run-up to the 2002 election, making paid campaign advertising the dominant form of political communication for much of the country. Many members of Congress and state legislatures now say they're unwilling to support broader campaign finance reforms, since they think they need big advertising budgets to "buy" their way onto TV channels that would otherwise ignore them.

This creates a rare opening for reformers. Job one is to get the Commerce Committee's rebuke of the FCC endorsed by the full Senate and through the House. That will require more pressure from citizens. The FCC received more than 700,000 communications opposing the rule changes before June 2, and since then Congress has received about 300,000 calls for intervention. With Senate action possible after the Fourth of July break, though not assured, this is the time to gear up the grassroots once more.

But let's not stop with a rollback of the rule changes. This is also the right time to push hard for legislation sponsored by McCain and Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold that would force television and radio stations to devote at least two hours a week at election time to candidate- and issue-centered programming.

Pressure from the public has created an opening for reformers who want Big Media to respect the public interest. Members of Congress who see something in it for themselves have shown a willingness to expand that opening. There's an opportunity here to do a lot more than just tell the FCC off; we might even be able, in McCain's words, to "reclaim the airwaves for our democracy." JOHN NICHOLS

Aiding Iran's Students

The Iranian student demonstrations that began on June 10 initially protested plans to privatize Teheran University and to raise tuition. They quickly became a forum for criticizing the repressive policies of the Islamic Republic. They gathered support from some in the middle class in the succeeding week and from students at provincial campuses. Right-wing paramilitaries attacked the students viciously, and hundreds have been arrested.

The demonstrators deserve the enthusiastic support of Ameri-

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COMMENT

cans. But direct statements by George W. Bush have a potential of backfiring. It is crucial to understand the movement and its limitations, as well as the nature of its enemies. Supreme Jurisprudent Ayatollah Ali Khamenei characterized the students as American mercenaries, a line that has resonance in a country where US conspiracies to change the government—like the 1953 CIA coup—have actually succeeded.

Some student protesters used the most radical language yet heard in public, shouting "Death to Khamenei!" Others called for the resignation of President Muhammad Khatami, earlier considered an ally by many students in their efforts to liberalize Iranian society. The students have been deeply frustrated by the hard-line clerics' ability to use the judiciary and other cleric-dominated institutions to block reform despite the reformers' success at the polls. The hard-liners crushed a previous student movement on July 9, 1999, and the current protests commemorate that event. Many students blame Khatami for not standing up to the far right.

Bush said on June 15 that these demonstrations were "the beginning of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran." Colin Powell also championed the students and their aspirations. Bush and Powell were not exactly SDS sympathizers in the 1960s and '70s. The irony of their support now for a youth counterculture and for student demonstrations against privatization should not be lost on observers.

Bush, as usual, is probably exaggerating. Successful political movements in modern Iranian history have typically involved a coalition of social forces. Merchants of large property, shopkeepers and artisans of the bazaar have been one key element; intellectuals and white-collar workers have been another; the Shiite clerical corps the third. Industrialization has made the working class important as well. These forces were behind the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11, the Mossadegh oil nationalization movement of 1951–53 and the Islamic Revolution of 1978–79.

The June student demonstrations have so far received support only from relatively well-to-do families of north Teheran, who drove down to the campus area in their automobiles and honked their horns in solidarity. The demonstrations depended for their coordination on calls to satellite television shows based in the West, but this technique hardly constitutes real political organizing. Until the student movement links with workers and small businesses, and until the two of them are powerful enough to take on the hard-line clerics, it will be able to do little more than protest.

The students are substantially to the left of most reformist parliamentarians and intellectuals, though 250 of the latter signed a letter to Khamenei in support of them. Hearing Bush speak up for them may raise protesters' spirits; it may also encourage them to make unrealistic demands or to overestimate the degree of practical US backing they are likely to receive. Bush Senior, after all, called on Iraqi Kurds and Shiites to rise up against Saddam in 1991 and then allowed them to be crushed. Bush's grandstanding may also lend credibility to conservative Iranian suspicions that the students are American mercenaries, thus weakening support for them inside Iran.

If America really wants to help the students, it should stop making it so difficult for Iranians to get US visas to visit or study here. It should lift the economic embargo on Iran, which does not hurt the oil-rich clerics but does keep Iran isolated from US influences. The visa restrictions and the embargo make people-to-people diplomacy difficult or impossible. It should provide US universities more money to teach Persian, so that more Americans can follow and engage with the democratic student movement.

Bush has also said he will not countenance the development of nuclear weapons by Iran. This stance would have credibility with the students and the Iranian public only if Washington were also pressing Israel, India and Pakistan to give up their nuclear weapons. It may well be time to acknowledge that nuclear energy is a fatally flawed industry, inevitably producing material that can be enriched into a bomb or used in dirty bombs. A two-pronged approach of supporting democracy in Iran and declaring the Middle East a nuclear-free zone is needed here.

Talk is cheap. The question for Bush is whether he is ready to push legislation that would offer practical help to the students and to all Iranians who aspire to basic freedoms. JUAN COLE

Juan Cole (www.juancole.com), a professor of modern Middle Eastern and South Asian history at the University of Michigan, is the author of Sacred Space and Holy War *(IB Tauris).*

CALVIN TRILLIN

A Photo, With Caption, In the *New York Times*

Dejectedly, a man sits on the ground.
The man has been detained. His hands are bound.
His crime is truly simple to explain:
Possessing pictures of Saddam Hussein.
Our soldiers snared him in a swift attack.
They're there to bring our freedoms to Iraq.

The 'Dodgy Dossier'

London

Like Kaa the python in Disney's *Jungle Book*, Tony Blair has staked his career on a single hypnotic refrain. Interviewed on TV, he contrives to sound like a man vouchsafing a confidence: "Look, in all honesty..." His rhetorical home is the moral high ground; harried in the House, he likes to make his opponents look petty, their concerns nit-picking distractions from his far-reaching vision. He himself is always above suspicion. If the government bungles, decoy ministers are deployed to take the flak; if party unity cracks, implausible rumors of Blair's impending fall are mobilized to rally the dissenters.

The transatlantic furor about Saddam's missing weapons comes at a very bad moment for Blair. Though the war's statue-toppling photo finish briefly mesmerized the masses, the government's I-told-you-so's ring increasingly hollow as weeks go by

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COMMENT

without the discovery of a single grain of anthrax or vial of poison gas. As if on cue, six British soldiers in Iraq were killed in a single day, reminding everyone of the real cost of war. The damage Blair has done to his party by dragging it unwillingly to war becomes more obvious; his autocratic style of government is thrown into sharp relief. The man who constantly asks us to trust him clearly trusts almost no one. This June's "botched reshuffle" pushed through overdue constitutional changes—including the abolition of the 1,400-year-old office of Lord Chancellor, the unelected head of the judiciary—without consulting Parliament or even the Cabinet. It was Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith who saved Blair's bacon, by rounding so crudely on the government that even the backbenchers momentarily closed ranks. The following week Peter Hain, newly appointed Leader of the House of Commons, broke a New Labour taboo by hinting that a tax rise for the very rich might ease the pressure on middle-income earners; Blair took time out from the EU summit in Greece to force him to recant. This crude attempt at censorship backfired everywhere. Right-wing tabloids went to town on Labour's "leaked" plans to "soak the rich"; liberal broadsheets shook their heads at Blair's "Stalinist" tactics. The dwindling number of Labour supporters who saw in Hain's remarks a flicker of official willingness to think about taxation and our cash-starved public services had their hopes dashed yet again.

Blair's paranoid caution on the T-word makes an instructive contrast with his willingness to risk his whole career for the invasion of Iraq. There's little doubt he did this out of passionate conviction—so passionate that mere facts could not stand in its way. He gave Churchillian speeches on the dangers of inaction; he went into the lion's den of handpicked hostile audiences on live prime-time TV; he called on history to be his judge. And, in pursuit of some higher truth, he or his close associates exaggerated—some would say falsified—evidence of the threat from Iraqi weapons, which formed the vaunted legal basis for the war.

Blair was quick to announce that neither he nor Alastair Campbell, his sultan of spin, would testify to the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee inquiry on the war. The Prime Minister may get away with it; Campbell is in the hot seat as we go to press. In true *Sopranos* style, he has been fingered by the foreign secretary for the government's "dodgy dossier," the report on Iraq cobbled together from articles available on the web and handed out in February at the United Nations.

So far, the most damning testimony to the inquiry has come from former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, whose resignation from the Cabinet shook the government on the eve of war. His conclusion that "in Iraq...intelligence was not being used to inform and shape policy, but to support policy that had already been settled" stopped barely short of imputing an intent to deceive to the government's propaganda. Intelligence briefings he received in the days before the war showed that "Iraq probably has no weapons of mass destruction in the commonly understood sense of the term"—let alone WMDs that could be launched in forty-five minutes as the Prime Minister claimed in Parliament. Clare Short, whose nonresignation at the eleventh hour pulled the rug from under the war's opponents, was vaguer and less circumspect. Though she accused Blair only of an "honorable deception," she claimed to know on high authority that he and Bush had set the date for war in Washington last summer; from that point on, nothing could change his mind. Decisions on Iraq were made behind closed doors by Blair's tight inner circle. The Cabinet was pointedly left out of the loop.

Disinformation, like intelligence on Iraq, is notoriously hard to source. The British government produced two alarmist documents in the guise of objective assessments to boost the case for war. The February "dodgy dossier" has been disowned by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw as "an embarrassment." Ten of its nineteen pages were copied without acknowledgment from scholarly studies—one of them written by a California postgrad—and "sexed up" for effect. ("Opposition groups" supported by Saddam magically become "terrorists.") No ministers were consulted in its preparation; no clearance was apparently sought from the intelligence services. The September report on Iraqi weapons that launched Blair's push for war bristled with references to sarin gas and aluminum tubes, fired off like military chaff to jam bullshit-detectors. One of its few hard claims, that Iraq had tried to buy 500 tons of uranium oxide from an African country, turned out to be based on forged documents—but not until after Colin Powell and George Tenet had used it to persuade Congress of Iraq's intent to build a bomb and Bush had trumpeted it in his State of the Union address. It was March before the United States finally handed over letters purporting to arrange Iraq's uranium purchase to the International Atomic Energy Agency; it took the IAEA less than a day to prove they were crude fakes.

Tracking the forgery in *The New Yorker*, Seymour Hersh points out that false accusations have been part of US and British policy toward Iraq at least since 1997. The uranium letters, he suggests, may have come from an MI6 propaganda office known to have spread disinformation in the 1990s. (The same office could be responsible for the forged documents "found" in Iraq and used to smear Labour MP George Galloway, a longtime defender of Saddam, as the dictator's paid retainer.) No doubt it suits Hersh's CIA sources to blame the British for this particular "bungle." But

(Continued on Page 24)

THE TRIALS OF LENNY BRUCE

Floyd Abrams, Laurence Tribe, Robin Williams, Margaret Cho, Martin Garbus and others are supporting a petition asking New York State Governor George Pataki to pardon legendary comedian Lenny Bruce (1925–66) posthumously. The petition documents how Bruce was prosecuted in 1964 for obscenities uttered in a Greenwich Village nightclub performance and, after a six-month trial, convicted and sentenced to a term on Rikers Island. He subsequently died of a drug overdose with the conviction still on the books. In 1968 the obscenity conviction of Bruce's co-defendant, the nightclub owner, was reversed, strongly suggesting that Bruce's conviction would have been reversed, too. To lend support to the pardon effort, go to www.trialsoflennybruce.com/pardon.htm.

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JONATHAN SCHELL

Cognitive Torture

A small journalistic cottage industry has grown up demonstrating that the Bush Administration took the nation to war against Iraq under false pretenses. The industry has been highly productive. Administration officials claimed certain knowledge that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction when they had no such knowledge. They claimed that the Iraqi government was seeking uranium ore from Niger months after the CIA had already disproven the charge. They claimed that Iraq had ties with Al Qaeda in the absence of any evidence of such ties, and much evidence to the contrary. When the intelligence agencies produced conclusions the Administration didn't like, it pressured them to come up with different conclusions. And so forth.

A parallel but less noticed collapse of Administration policy has been occurring with regard to another region. As early as the State of the Union address, George W. Bush announced a radical change in US policies for dealing with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The United States, the President said, would "prevent" the spread of the weapons by the preemptive use of military force. "We will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." The words "will not permit" are the words of an ultimatum. They place the military prestige of the country making them on the line as clearly as language can. The threat was of course carried out in Iraq—with the nugatory results just mentioned.

In another country, North Korea, however, the nuclear programs were real. They were not only real; they led (according to both the North Korean and the US governments) to the actual production of nuclear weapons. Yet the United States did nothing. Administration spokesmen repeatedly declared that North Korea's acquisition of nuclear arms was "not a crisis." How, observers demanded to know at the time, could it be a crisis for Iraq to have a nuclear weapons program (which then was still thought to exist) but not a crisis for North Korea to have an actual nuclear arsenal?

Since then, the United States has backed off even further, declaring that the new American objective is merely to prevent North Korea from exporting its nuclear materials. The United States would "absolutely not" permit such behavior, Secretary of State Powell told Tim Russert on *Meet the Press*. An Administration official told the *New York Times*, "The President said that the central worry is not what they've got but where it goes." But the fact remains that the clearly articulated threats of the world's only superpower in regard to the most serious issue facing it and the world—nuclear danger—turned out to be hollow. Yet the debacle has been met with silence.

Those who rejected the original strategy as reckless and unworkable didn't call Bush to account, because they liked the default better than the policy. Those—most of them Republicans—who approved of the policy stayed silent because they didn't want to criticize a President of their own party. One group likes the collapse on substantive grounds; the other won't attack it on political grounds. (Yet even now, Republicans excoriate President Clinton for accepting the negotiation of an Agreed Framework with North Korea to deal with its nuclear program in 1994.) In truth, as Michael Levi of the Brookings Institution has pointed out in *The New Republic*, stopping exports is as infeasible as pre-empting North Korea's nuclear program was in the first place. The new goal is merely a way of saving face.

In one respect, the treatment of Iraq and North Korea were opposite: In the first, the United States knocked out a government to get at nuclear weapons that, as far as we know, weren't there; in the second it backed off in the face of nuclear weapons (and a large conventional force) that *were* there. But in another respect, the policies were alike: The words and commitments made by the Administration on one day had evaporated the next.

The sequel in Iraq was also surprising. A month after American forces had taken control of Iraq, they had not secured its nuclear facilities. Had the Administration, knowing full well that it was deceiving the public about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, failed to take its own claims seriously because it knew they were not true?

A further wrinkle in this increasingly strange story came recently when the President said (in words already cited in this space) that the United States has "found weapons of mass destruction." He was referring to two vans discovered in Iraq that may or may not have been built to produce biological weapons. If someone states to the world that he has a black dog when he does not, he is lying. But what do you call it if, in full sight of all, he says he has a black dog while pointing to a white dog?

It is cognitive torture. Just as hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue, a lie is the tribute that vice pays to truth: The element of concealment pays respect to the hearer's demand to be told what is true. But if the "lie" is out in the open—if any fool can see that the dog is white—then truth itself is disrespected.

At that moment, attention must shift from the deceiver to the deceived. The corruption threatens to spread from the teller to the hearer—from the Administration to the country, from them to us. Today lies, exaggerations, contradictions and broken promises litter the mental landscape, like uncollected garbage, polluting and poisoning the intellectual and moral air. A fog of amnesia covers the scene. What was said ten minutes ago is forgotten. What was promised yesterday never appears, and no one cares. What is needed now is not so much more investigation as an awakening of will. The question is no longer what the government is doing but whether the public will hold it to account. Does the public like to hear the lies as much as the Administration likes to tell them, or will our self-respect demand a response? Cognitive torture calls for cognitive indignation. And indignation should lead to action.

Jonathan Schell, the Harold Willens Peace Fellow of the Nation Institute, is the author of the just-published The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People *(Metropolitan).*

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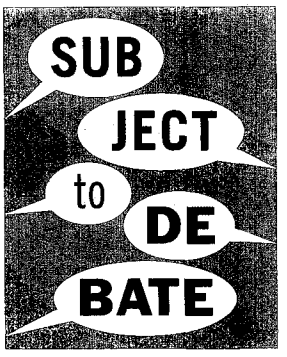
KATHA POLLITT

Lost Innocents



Every day, DNA testing overturns another man's rape or murder conviction. *The Exonerated*, a play drawn from the stories of innocent people released from death row, is an Off Broadway hit. We are learning that people confess to crimes they did not commit, that the most confident eyewitness testimony can be mistaken, that a state crime lab can be as sloppy as a greasy-spoon kitchen, that police officers lie. Thanks largely to *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert, the State of Texas has released from prison all but two of the forty-six residents of Tulia who had been arrested—including 10 percent of the town's black population—after being essentially framed by an undercover cop on drug charges. These and other high-profile reversals might almost make you believe the cliché that "the system works."

But then there is the case of Bernard Baran. Three years ago in this space I wrote about Baran, who, as a 19-year-old childcare worker in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, was the first to be convicted in the wave of mass-molestation daycare cases that swept the country in the 1980s. Ever since, I've hoped to follow up with the news that he too is free (he has been incarcerated since 1985, or just about half his life). After all, DNA isn't the only kind of forensic science that has moved ahead: The assumptions under which the daycare cases were prosecuted, the methods used to gather evidence, the expertise advanced by the prosecution, have all been pretty much exploded. Thanks to researchers like Elizabeth Loftus, Maggie Bruck and Stephen Ceci, we know much more now about how to interview children, about the role that adult pressure, including the questions of anxious parents, can play in getting small kids to "disclose" things that never happened and sometimes to remember them as if they did. As uncovered by crusading journalists Debbie Nathan and Dorothy Rabinowitz, cases like that of the McMartin Preschool (the Buckeys), Wee Care (Margaret Kelly Michaels) and Fells Acres (the Amiraults) look in retrospect like bouts of collective insanity. It seems amazing now that anyone could believe that perversions of a Sadean extravagance—being tied to a tree on the front lawn while a teacher cut the leg off a squirrel, being forced to lick peanut butter off a teacher's genitals while she played the piano—could take place in busy spaces with no one the wiser and the children trooping cheerfully back the next day. *Capturing the Friedmans*, Andrew Jarecki's much-praised documentary about the case of Arnold and Jesse Friedman, raises these questions well: How likely is it that the Friedmans orchestrated group sessions of naked anal-penetration "leap frog" that one student "remembered" only under hypnosis?

Baran's case lacks the wilder elements of some other daycare cases—there were no tales of tunnels, spaceships, robots or magic rooms. But in many ways it was typical. The Early Childhood Development Center was a well-run, well-staffed, respected facility in which parents were free to drop in anytime and in which privacy was minimal. The original complaint came from a troubled family—the mother and her boyfriend were drug addicts leading violent and chaotic lives, and "Peter," whose alleged complaint to his mother that his penis hurt set off the investigation, was an unruly, difficult child. Once the panic got going, the children were presumed to be "in denial" if they said nothing happened and truthful if they "disclosed." Against a gung-ho prosecutor riding a tide of national and local hysteria, Baran had the kind of legal counsel you get if all you can pay is the $500 your mother got from selling her car.

An important and unusual feature of Baran's case is that he is gay. "Peter's" family had complained to the ECDC about that, as had another family, whose daughter testified against Baran. Playing on the popular image of homosexuals as pedophiles (never mind that Baran was accused of molesting girls as well as boys), the prosecutor compared him to "a chocoholic in a candy store." To explain why "Peter" tested positive for gonorrhea of the throat but Baran tested negative, he suggested that Baran might have taken penicillin before being tested (Baran is allergic) and reminded the jury that male homosexuals and prostitutes had high rates of STDs. Unfortunately, that prosecutor, Dan Ford, is now a judge in western Massachusetts.

Would Baran be convicted today? As a not entirely sympathetic article in the *Boston Globe* (October 1, 2000) observed, there were two pieces of medical evidence against him, and both have been scientifically discredited: That particular gonorrhea test is now known to give many false positives, and the "notches" on one girl's hymen, presented as evidence of penetration, are now known to be normal features in some 60 percent of nonabused girls. Tellingly, moreover, no fresh cases of mass-molestation have made headlines in the past eight years. Rape, murder, assault, child abuse, still happen all the time, but this particular crime does not. The acclaim for *Capturing the Friedmans*, and the publication of *No Crueler Tyrannies*, Dorothy Rabinowitz's exposé of the Amirault case and others, are perhaps signs that we are ready to see the panic in historical perspective. But is the justice system ready to do the right thing by the people convicted when the panic was at its height? Gerald Amirault is still in prison, and so is Bernard Baran.

His legal team—John Swomley, Pam Nicholson and Harvey Silverglate—has been trying for more than two years to get from the district attorney, Gerard Downing of Berkshire County, records to which the court has agreed the defense is entitled and which, the lawyers believe, could exonerate Baran. There's been one delay after another. You would think the least the State of Massachusetts could do would be to turn over to the defense in an expeditious fashion materials the state's own courts have agreed it should have.

Bernard Baran is a working-class man with no money and no wealthy defenders. Gay groups won't touch the case—the stigma of pedophilia is too great. All he has is his family and a small band of supporters, led by Bob Chatelle and Jim D'Entremont. Three years ago, the generosity of *Nation* readers gave a huge boost to Baran's cause. If you would like to help now, you can send a donation to The Bernard Baran Justice Committee, PO Box 230783, Boston, MA 02123. To learn more, see www.freebaran.org. ■

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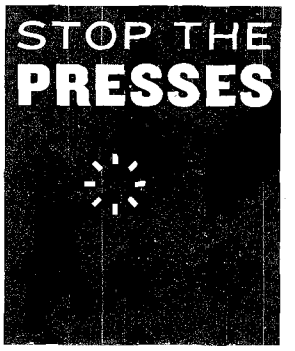
ERIC ALTERMAN

Liberal Signs of Life

If you want to date the beginning of conservative domination of the opinion media, you could do worse than to pick Election Day 1964. That's when Richard Mellon Scaife, later joined by many others, figured out that it was pointless for wealthy conservatives to pour money into the coffers of conservative candidates like Barry Goldwater without first investing in their own form of media through which to communicate their ideas.



The multibillion-dollar conservative investment helped to create much of the media world in which we wallow today. Liberals are now grappling with a problem not unlike that facing the far right forty years ago: how to get one's ideas across through media that twist and distort them beyond recognition? It is hardly an academic question.

Just about the only thing liberals have going for them these days is that most Americans agree with them on the issues. This is partly due to the annexation of the Republican Party by its Taliban faction. It is also likely a product of the relative conservatism of today's liberals, present company included. Today, "liberal" is just another word for "not nuts." Don't go around invading countries that do not pose a threat and lie to the world to justify it; don't destroy the nation's fiscal health in order to give trillion-dollar gifts to the wealthy; don't gratuitously insult countries whose help we need to maintain world peace and security; don't shred the Constitution at every opportunity, etc., etc.

Why, then, if liberals are speaking little more than consensus common sense, do they seem to be in danger of political oblivion? Well, lots of reasons actually, but a big one is a right-wing opinion media that treats these principles as if they derived from *The Communist Manifesto*. Report on dissension about Iraq between Republicans and military men, and you're treated as the vanguard of the antiwar movement. Do the math on a tax cut geared to multimillionaires, and you've declared "class warfare." Mention that Bush is neglecting "homeland security" while bin Laden remains at large, and you're giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

The power of conservatives to control the discourse through biased media is only now beginning to dawn on liberals. Progressive politicians, activists and intellectuals once believed that all they had to do was make their case, and the media would faithfully pass it along to voters, who would judge the argument on its merits. Thanks to the "liberal media" fallacy, few seemed to notice that the world hasn't worked this way for a while. Don't forget that shortly after coming into office, Bill Clinton himself complained he did not get "one damn bit of credit from the knee-jerk liberal press."

Well, at least that jig is up. If you run into Clinton these days, he's likely to bend your ear about the media's shameless affection for Bush & Co. (Hillary's belated "aha moment" apparently came with her discovery of the profoundly misnamed "vast right-wing conspiracy." If only she had known during the healthcare debate...) Today liberals are finally starting to take the first steps in the enormously expensive task of building their own media institutions.

MoveOn.org, the savviest progressive organization in recent memory, is brilliantly exploiting the communications potential of the Internet to bring pressure to bear on politicians, support progressive campaigns and raise money for the right causes. Its recent "presidential primary" is just one of the group's innovative ideas. And John Podesta, Clinton's much-admired former Chief of Staff, together with top former Gephardt aide Laura Nichols, is leading the effort to launch what is widely described as a "liberal Heritage Foundation" with a projected $10 million annual operating budget.

Meanwhile Al Gore, joined by Joel Hyatt, the founder of Hyatt Legal Services and a former Democratic candidate for Senate in Ohio, is in the process of tapping into his presidential support network to explore the possibility of forming a new liberal cable network. Given the daunting challenges involved before production can even begin—including raising hundreds of millions of dollars and then obtaining carriage agreements with countless local cable systems—he'll need all the help he can get if he is serious. So far he's getting some from Steve Rattner of Quadrangle and Stan Shuman of Allen and Co.

In addition, venture capitalists Sheldon and Anita Drobny have formed AnShell Media LLC to try to put together a national network of liberal talk-radio stations. They've hired Jon Sinton, who helped start Jim Hightower's nationally syndicated radio program in the 1990s, before Disney bought up the network that carried it, and Michael Eisner unceremoniously dumped the Texas populist from its programming. (Hightower had made Eisner's greed in the face of Disney's poor performance a frequent topic of discussion.) They also have comedian Al Franken on board. What's more, like Gore's, this effort reflects an understanding that a token liberal program sandwiched between conservative blowhards is bound to fail.

But the cost of starting a cable network and securing the local carriage deals is so vast as to be almost unimaginable. As for radio, the Drobnys are beginning with what they say is just a twentieth of the $200 million they'll need. And nobody's even certain liberals will respond or if we'll be any good at it. Moreover, when you think about the combination of Fox/Limbaugh/Hannity/O'Reilly/the *Wall Street Journal*/the *Washington Times*/Heritage/Hoover/Cato/CSIS—to say nothing of the colonization of the mainstream media by the conservative punditocracy—and then throw in the new FCC regulations that allow the likes of ideologically driven wing-nut outfits like Clear Channel and News Corp. to swallow even more of our means of communication, you have to be optimistic to the point of delusion to hope that liberals can even begin to level the playing field for the proponents of their ideas.

Then again, there really is no alternative. The extreme right already controls all three branches of government and an increasingly significant percentage of the media the Constitution appoints to be their watchdog.

The "liberal media" is dead. Long live the liberal media. ■

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ARTICLES

Humanitarian Intervention:

A FORUM

The war in Iraq raised some difficult questions for many thoughtful Americans. Even if Saddam Hussein's regime posed no threat to our security or to the security of its neighbors, couldn't the war be justified on humanitarian grounds, as necessary to free the Iraqi people from a particularly odious dictatorship? And don't we, as a general principle, have a moral obligation to come to the rescue of people living under brutal regimes? Yet in expanding the notion of humanitarian intervention, is there not a danger of creating a rationale for a new form of American imperialism? And in any case, what right does the United States—or for that matter any nation—have to determine when and where to intervene? To promote a more informed debate about the emerging doctrine of humanitarian intervention, we asked twelve leading thinkers from around the world to offer their views on these important questions.

—The Editors

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Richard Falk

The 1990s were undoubtedly the golden age of humanitarian diplomacy. The cold war was over, opening political space for an array of international issues associated with acute human suffering, especially in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa and the Balkans. "The CNN factor" finally pushed a reluctant George Bush Sr. to make moves to protect the Kurds in northern Iraq from the vengeful violence of Baghdad in the aftermath of the Gulf War and, later, to rescue a starving Somali population caught in a maelstrom of internal armed struggle and political anarchy. Bill Clinton arrived at the White House advocating a "muscular multilateralism" that was determined to restore governance in Somalia and put an end to ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.

But after the 1993 "Black Hawk Down" incident in Mogadishu, in which eighteen American soldiers (and hundreds of Somalis) were killed, the US government all but abandoned humanitarian intervention, even using its leverage to prevent the United Nations from making an effective response in Rwanda, where it might have saved hundreds of thousands of lives. The UN role in Bosnia was kept unacceptably passive, culminating in the 1995 Serbian massacre of some 7,000 Muslim males in the supposed UN "safe haven" of Srebrenica.

These events were too much for the conscience of the world to bear, giving rise to a role for NATO in Bosnia, Washington's coercive diplomacy that hammered out the Dayton agreement and the NATO effort that successfully rescued the Albanian Kosovars from the menace of Serbian ethnic cleansing. Bush Jr. came to the White House determined to resist this trend, arguing against "nation building" and generally skeptical of the entire humanitarian agenda, opposing any connection with the International Criminal Court and seeking to minimize the relevance of the UN.

After September 11, the American approach to humanitarian intervention morphed into post hoc rationalizations for uses of force otherwise difficult to reconcile with international law. The new dynamic was first evident in the aftermath of the Afghanistan war, when the victory claims of Washington subtly shifted from the destruction of Al Qaeda to the liberation of the Afghan people from the brutalities of Taliban rule. But in Iraq this dynamic has reached an extreme, virtually ignoring the prewar rationale stressing an Iraqi threat while playing up the postwar justification of the liberation of the Iraqi people. There is no doubt that the Iraqi people have been liberated, although for what remains obscure.

I believe the Bush Administration has been doing its best to wreck world order as it had been evolving, and that part of the wreckage is the abandonment of legal restraints on the use of international force, the heart and soul of the UN Charter. The Iraq war epitomized this process. The world needs the international will and capabilities to rescue vulnerable populations from impending humanitarian catastrophes, but it doesn't need imperial wars that hide their true character in the fog of a moralizing rhetoric.

As long as US foreign policy is run from a Bush White House, the best chance for humanitarian intervention to fulfill its potential is for the US government to get out of the way, as it has seemed to be doing in relation to the genocidal events in Congo, allowing France to take the major responsibility. Not only is this beneficial for the people in tragic circumstances, but it may be healthy for the UN to become less dependent on the United States. It seems clear that the Bush Administration is uninterested in the pursuit of humanitarian goals for their own sake. As the Iraq war demonstrated, to proclaim such goals as a cover for imperial objectives is dangerous for world order and undermines international law and the UN, while at best achieving humanitarian results as an accidental byproduct.

Richard Falk, a visiting professor at the University of California, is the author of The Great Terror War *(Olive Branch).*

Mary Kaldor

If we believe in the equality of human beings, then we also favor the extension of a rule-governed society to the global arena and, in particular, the extension of cosmopolitan law—that is to say, international law that applies to individuals. I am in favor of humanitarian intervention if it is understood as cosmopolitan law enforcement.

But humanitarian intervention, understood in this way, is quite different from war. Individual governments cannot take the law into their own hands, any more than individual citizens can unilaterally decide when the law is violated.

There has to be an agreed set of criteria to determine when a humanitarian intervention is appropriate, and there has to be an agreed procedure for determining whether those criteria apply. Moreover, means are as important as goals. Humanitarian intervention is about preventing humanitarian catastrophe. The aim is not victory over another collectivity but the protection of ordinary people and the arrest of those criminals responsible for the catastrophe. Thus humanitarian intervention is like policing, even though it requires the use of military force. War is about taking sides, and the lives of soldiers on one side are privileged over the lives of civilians on the other side. In humanitarian intervention, the soldier, like a policeman or firefighter, risks his or her life to save the lives of civilians.

What would it mean to have had a true humanitarian intervention in Iraq? First of all, it would have meant taking seriously those provisions in the 1991 Security Council resolutions that referred to human rights by, for example, sending human rights monitors as well as weapons inspectors. Second, it might have been necessary to deploy troops on the border to put pressure on the Iraqi regime to comply with the resolution, but the potential task of those troops would not have been invasion and regime change; it would have been to protect civilians in the event that the government decided to crush an uprising, as happened, for example, in 1991.

One argument often made against some people protesting that the Iraq war was illegal is that they favored the Kosovo war even though there was no Security Council resolution and even though the means—bombing—were more like war than humanitarian

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intervention, and Western lives were privileged over the lives of the people NATO forces were supposed to be helping. I supported the war in Kosovo, although I was unhappy with the means. I favored a humanitarian intervention of the type described above, with troops on the ground to protect civilians. Later, I was a member of the Independent International Commission on Kosovo, chaired by Richard Goldstone. That commission concluded that the Kosovo intervention was illegal, because there was no Security Council resolution, but legitimate because it resolved a humanitarian crisis and had widespread support within the international community and civil society. The commission went on to argue that a gap between legality and legitimacy is very dangerous and needs to be removed by specifying conditions for humanitarian intervention.

Unfortunately, this was not done, which allowed those who favored the war in Iraq to claim a humanitarian justification along with all those other fast-changing justifications about weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

The war in Iraq was neither legal nor legitimate. It did not meet the conditions for humanitarian intervention, and it did not command support either among civil society or the international community. To confuse pre-emptive war with humanitarian intervention, as British Prime Minister Tony Blair does, is a recipe for more violence and for global polarization.

Mary Kaldor, school professor at the London School of Economics, is the author of Global Civil Society: An Answer to War *(Blackwell).*

Carl Tham

The concept of humanitarian intervention emerged in the 1990s against a background of civil war and atrocities in a number of regions. In all these cases, vast segments of the population were oppressed, tortured or murdered. In Rwanda more than 500,000 were killed within the space of three months. It was genocide, but the international community did little to stop it.

These experiences led Secretary General Kofi Annan, following the example of his two predecessors, to suggest that the international community has the right to intervene—and should intervene—to protect vulnerable groups in cases of immediate, severe and large-scale abuses of human rights or genocide. To employ military force in extreme situations of abuse is not necessarily inconsistent with the spirit of the UN Charter and international law, they argued, if such an intervention has the backing of a Security Council resolution.

The 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo was carried out without such a resolution. The Independent International Commission on Kosovo later concluded that the NATO action was legitimate because diplomatic means had been exhausted and because it was necessary to put a stop to the Serbian atrocities and oppression of the Albanian Kosovars—but still illegal because it did not receive approval from the Security Council. The commission suggested a principled framework, which could be used to guide future responses to imminent humanitarian catastrophes and to narrow the gap between legality and legitimacy. A Canadian commission later reached the same conclusion and developed criteria for possible interventions.

These reports, as well as the statements of the Secretary General, stressed that a military intervention can be legitimate only if there is an acute human rights crisis and if all diplomatic efforts have failed. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, for instance, says that military intervention for human protection is warranted only if there are abuses of human rights that result in large-scale loss of life with or without genocidal intent, or large-scale ethnic cleansing.

Was the US intervention in Iraq of this kind—legitimate but illegal? Certainly the Saddam Hussein regime was oppressive, but there was no immediate human rights emergency. The potential threat of weapons of mass destruction—which was the main issue the United States brought to the Security Council—had nothing to do with the arguments in favor of humanitarian intervention. Also, diplomatic efforts were not exhausted. In fact, it was very obvious that the Bush Administration had already decided in favor of war against Iraq as a demonstration of the doctrine of preventive action, which is very far from humanitarian intervention.

The arguments made by the United States in favor of the war were different from arguments for humanitarian intervention. The war was publicly launched as a war against terror or against evil; the Saddam regime was claimed to be a threat to the United States, indeed the whole world. These last arguments were so obviously exaggerated that they were dropped in favor of the argument that the war was a war of liberation against an oppressive regime, which was also Tony Blair's favorite argument.

The war against Iraq was illegal—few dispute that—and it was not legitimate in the sense of the Kosovo war: an unavoidable war because all diplomatic efforts had failed in an emerging human rights catastrophe. The idea to expand the very restrictive idea of humanitarian intervention into a general license for war against repressive regimes is, I think, very dangerous. Even more so is the concept of preventive action, which can be used at random as an argument for war. It will in fact erode the whole idea of an international legal order as expressed in the UN Charter and its prohibition of the use of force.

Carl Tham is the Swedish ambassador to Germany.

Samantha Power

Three contested aspects of "humanitarian intervention"—legal authority, threshold of abuse and relevance of motive—demand reconsideration in the wake of the Iraq war. Although the human rights framework has long been premised on the recognition that states can't be trusted, the UN Charter left the task of authorizing humanitarian intervention to those same untrustworthy states. Relying for legal authority upon the Security Council, which includes Russia and China, two notorious human rights abusers, almost guarantees inaction, even where the human stakes are colossal. On the other hand, dismissing the Security Council altogether, as the Bush Administration seems

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intent on doing, invites pre-emption, chaos and, in the end, probably greater bloodshed. Absent long-overdue Security Council reform, we need a fallback mechanism for legitimizing interventions, to be found perhaps in the office of the Secretary General, which is the one UN body that has the capacity to transcend state interests.

When it comes to deciding when human rights abuses have become so egregious as to warrant intervention, most people agree in principle that genocide or massive crimes against humanity constitute a worthy threshold. Yet few in practice can agree when that threshold has been crossed. President Slobodan Milosevic was responsible for some 200,000 deaths in Bosnia; yet in the case of Kosovo in 1999, because his regime had killed "only" 3,000 and expelled 100,000 Kosovars at the time war was being considered, many critics of US foreign policy at home and abroad argued that NATO military force should not be employed.

Surprisingly, many of these same critics also expressed outrage at the Security Council's failure, in January 1994, to act on UN commander Romeo Dallaire's warnings about imminent extermination in Rwanda. If we are ever to prevent genocide, and not merely ritually lament it after the fact, we have to improve our capacity to imagine the costs of inaction, and to act upon evidence of direct and immediate mortal threats.

Iraq presented a ghastly challenge to humanitarian hawks. Saddam Hussein had carried out a savage genocide in 1988, killing more than 100,000 Kurds, and he was presiding over one of the cruelest tyrannies the world has known, murdering thousands more in succeeding years. Yet Saddam's cruelty did not satisfy the threshold for most of the war's opponents, either because, in opposing Bush, they chose to ignore Saddam's atrocities or because, in not trusting Bush, they believed the Iraqis, like the Afghans, would be abandoned in the end.

In assessing a humanitarian intervention, a third point of controversy involves the question of how much we should care about the motives of the intervener. Some overemphasize the relevance of motive, refusing to back any intervention that isn't "purely" humanitarian. Others downplay motive, arguing that states' true intentions are impossible to discern, and thus what really matters is humanitarian effect. Both approaches are wrong. Motives matter not because we can realistically expect them to be pure, but because knowing why a state is intervening gives us predictive power: The relative weight an intervening state gives to humanitarian concerns tells us an awful lot about the lengths to which interveners will go to spare civilian life, and the willingness of the intervener to follow through, expending the necessary political, financial and military capital to actually provide a secure environment on behalf of those in whose name a war is launched.

Once war has been waged, of course, results do matter. And in judging the long-term effects of such missions, it is important not simply to measure the humanizing and dehumanizing effects on the recipient country but also to look at those on the region, on the intervening country or countries, and on the international system as a whole.

Samantha Power, a lecturer at the Kennedy School of Government, is the author of the Pulitzer Prize–winning "A Problem From Hell": America and the Age of Genocide *(Harperperennial).*

Mahmood Mamdani

An International Rescue Committee Report estimates that 3.3 million people have died over the past four and a half years of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Yet no significant center of power or opinion is calling for a "humanitarian intervention" in Congo. Behind the continuing humanitarian tragedy in Congo are a combination of forces—local, regional and global—that profit from this conflict in various ways. So long as the beneficiaries of the Congo war outweigh millions of its victims in influence, there will be no humanitarian intervention—other than the small international force with a limited mandate recently sent to Bunia.

Congo confirms the lesson many Africans drew from the genocide in Rwanda a decade ago. The withdrawal of UN forces took place in the face of overwhelming evidence of growing and massive human rights violations. Having withdrawn the UN forces, the Security Council authorized a French "humanitarian" intervention. Operation Turquoise saved many Tutsi lives, but it also rescued the political and military leadership of the genocide. To date, neither the UN nor any other international forum has held the French accountable for that intervention.

Operation Turquoise fits neatly into a history of imperial interventions over the modern period. Not surprisingly, every imperial intervention claims to be humanitarian, but calling an intervention "humanitarian" cannot strip it of its politics. Whether in Congo or Rwanda, Kosovo or Iraq, every intervention—and non-intervention—has its politics.

To understand the politics of the Iraq war, we should first consider two aspects: the willingness to target civilian populations and the refusal of those who wield this enormously destructive power beyond their borders to be accountable to those who may suffer its consequences.

In a globalized world of highly unequal states, humanitarian intervention will in practice turn out to be a big-power intervention. Every intervention will serve a complex of interests, general and specific. There can be no such thing as an unambiguous humanitarian intervention.

It is curious that those who support humanitarian interventions assume that these interventions must be military, and that they will differ from other military interventions in their benign, indeed humanitarian, intent and effect. If these assumptions go unchallenged, humanitarian intervention will become a soothing name for unilateral and unaccountable exercises of power. I make no such assumption. I suggest we place political accountability at the center of the discussion. The Iraq war has given us a terrifying demonstration of the technological and military capacities that the world's single superpower is capable of wielding. It has also given us a rare instance of a solid majority in the UN first refusing to authorize a US-led "humanitarian" intervention, and then disintegrating in its face. Earlier, this same majority had set up an International Criminal Court but only by conceding provisions that guaranteed temporary impunity for American power.

These developments confirm the need to strive for an international legal and political arrangement that is representative and

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effective in holding accountable those who wield such destructive capacity. They underline both the political limits of the current international state system, based on sovereignty, and the potential for antiwar movements demanding that power whose reach is international should indeed be internationally accountable.

Unless all interventions (both military and nonmilitary) by all powers are subject to review by some organization of international law, we will not be able to determine the justness of a particular intervention (or nonintervention).

Mahmood Mamdani is Herbert Lehman Professor of Government and director of the Institute of African Studies at Columbia University. He is author of Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism *(Princeton),* When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and Genocide in Rwanda *(Princeton) and* Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: Terror, "Ours" and "Theirs," in the Late Cold War *(forthcoming from Pantheon in 2004).*

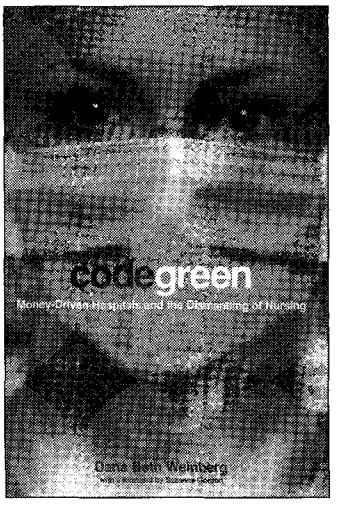
David Rieff

As both prescription and description, "humanitarian intervention" is a misnomer. What we really mean when we speak of humanitarian intervention (or human rights intervention, or "the responsibility to protect," two newer versions of the same formulation) is war. To be sure, we mean war in a good cause. Such wars are to be fought to protect civilian populations from outside aggression when their own states have collapsed or, for some other reason, cannot or choose not to defend them. Or they may be undertaken when a state is too weak to repress warlordism, as in the case of Sierra Leone. Finally, they may be undertaken when the state itself is the oppressor, as in Kosovo.

Such wars may well be warranted and just, but let them be called by their right name, not sanitized by the term humanitarian intervention. Admitting that what is being called for is war puts the issue of whether or not to use force in a place like the Democratic Republic of Congo or Liberia in its proper context—the political. The virtue of the political is that the case for making the most tragic of all public decisions becomes controversial and a matter for public debate, rather than some kind of categorical moral imperative whose need to be undertaken is deemed to be self-evident.

And such debate is urgent. Because the inescapable result of enshrining humanitarian intervention as one desirable response to wars and refugee crises will be a new colonial order. In most cases to take military action is, in practice, to replace the government of the country in question with the rule either of the humanitarian intervener or of some other outside actor, most commonly the UN, or else of a local surrogate that is in fact controlled by the outside intervener.

For humanitarian interventionists and the human rights activists to routinely claim, as they do, that this is not a serious problem because (a) their intentions are of the best, focused solely on the interests of victims, and (b) they are only acting in accordance with settled international law, is at the very least historically amnesiac. Nineteenth-century European colonialism,



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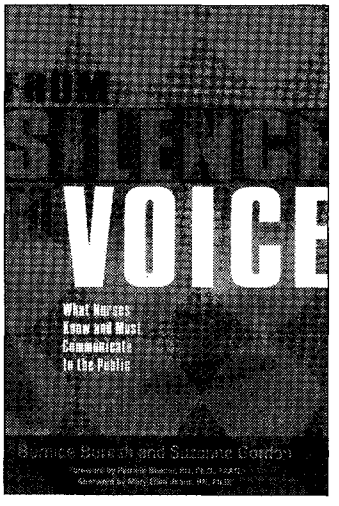

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particularly the so-called second imperialism of the last part of that century, was also explicitly undertaken in the name of humanitarian imperative. And this rationale was no more solely window dressing for the economic interests of Britain or France than today's humanitarianism is solely window dressing for neoliberal globalization and the "virtual empire" of the United States. It was a genuine effort at the betterment of humanity and an effort to redress some of the worst evils of the world.

In the nineteenth century, the twin goals of imperialists were stamping out slavery and bettering public health through fighting disease and improving sanitation. Today, the goal is guaranteeing human rights, preventing genocide and bettering public health through fighting disease and improving sanitation. The project of the humanitarian interventionists is a new colonial order.

Perhaps this colonialism is necessary. And perhaps humanitarian wars, including humanitarian wars that are likely to be far bloodier than those of the 1990s, are going to be necessary—morally, politically and culturally unavoidable in the present century. But let us call them by their right name, and not dress them in fantasies of international justice. Human rights and humanitarianism are not unassailable moral goods. They are ideologies—as questionable as neoliberalism or Communism or Christianity. This is the reality that the advocates of humanitarian intervention are trying—with worrying success, in my view—to finesse.

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Eric Rouleau

In principle, who could oppose a humanitarian intervention, especially if it is a question of preventing genocide or crimes against humanity? Yet the UN Charter bars interference in the internal affairs of member states. This provision was introduced by the founders of the international organization for two main reasons: first, to respect the sovereignty of member states, and second—and more important—to maintain world peace. The Charter's authors did not want to provide states, or groups of states, with a pretext to intervene for inevitably self-serving motives. Hence the absolute necessity that any humanitarian intervention be approved beforehand by the Security Council.

The unipolar world in which we now live has disrupted the agreed-upon rules. The United States has taken it upon itself to designate—very selectively—the guilty, and to intervene with or without UN approval. American notions of unilateralism, preventive wars and military interventions for the purpose of "regime change"—whether to install democracy or any other system—run counter to the very foundations of international legitimacy.

Even assuming the purity of US motives, one cannot help but notice that its list of "rogue states" does not include any pro-Western nations, some of which would certainly qualify as "evil" if the same criteria were applied to all. One might also note that democracy is not an exportable commodity, especially by violence. Indeed, it would be easy enough for the international community, if it so desired, to take concrete measures to encourage states to democratize, either by imposing sanctions or—preferably—by offering a variety of incentives.

The military intervention against Serbia to "liberate" Kosovo, under the auspices of NATO (instead of the UN), constituted a dangerous precedent, whatever the humanitarian justifications. There were other ways to protect the Kosovars without resorting to war, which the belligerent powers, citing half-truths and distortions, chose to ignore. Today a number of NATO members, especially France, are no longer prepared to follow the United States blindly down this slippery slope.

The United States is now facing a credibility crisis of unprecedented proportions. The main arguments advanced to justify the invasion of Iraq have all turned out to be ill founded, and it is more than doubtful that "democracy"—even as interpreted by the Pentagon hawks—will be instituted. In fact, there are indications that the United States is seeking to make Iraq a satellite, to establish military bases, to control the oil resources and to award itself fabulous contracts for reconstruction, in anticipation of consolidating its hegemony over the Middle East.

Imperialism, be it American or European, past or present, does not differ fundamentally. Certainly it is never in its essence humanitarian. That is why the world must continue to support the role of the UN Security Council in determining whether or not an intervention is legitimate.

Eric Rouleau is a writer and former French ambassador to Tunisia and Turkey.

Zia Mian

In 1948 the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaiming: "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized." One need look no further than Palestine or Congo to see how states and the international community have failed in their charge.

In its many interventions in other societies during the cold war, the United States often claimed to be furthering human rights and freedoms. This legacy was embraced by President George Bush in his 2002 West Point speech: "Moral clarity was essential to our victory in the cold war." But let us recall that this "moral clarity" involved American-backed coups, repression and war across the Third World. Nor should we forget the thousands of nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war that still cast a shadow over humanity. Until the political and economic interests and ideas responsible for these horrors change substantially, there can be no question of US humanitarian intervention or promotion of democracy, except inadvertently. Afghanistan and Iraq do not change this judgment.

If history advises that it cannot be left to the "moral clarity" of the United States (or any other state) to determine where, when or how to change regimes, whether it be to prevent or punish the most brutal crimes against humanity or spread democracy, then who decides and how?

The UN Security Council offers a collective process, but no

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reason for hope. Compassion and justice are no more to be found when those in power meet in conclave than when they are alone. Moreover, the Security Council is hostage to the veto, an inequitable arrangement the United States in particular insisted on when the UN was created. No power that has the veto is willing to cede it, even though, as Iraq showed, where the United States is concerned the veto of others is as good as none. So barring cases where the United States, for its own reasons, chooses to intervene or permits others to, there is little the UN has to offer except to bury the dead and provide succor for survivors—unless the General Assembly organizes and asserts itself to challenge the United States and the Security Council.

The International Criminal Court (ICC), which was set up to punish crimes against humanity and genocide, may offer a new forum for making decisions about the most extreme situations requiring humanitarian intervention. Unlike the state, international law, while in practice often partial and unjust, inherently must orient itself toward standards of universality and equity. It is possible to imagine that the Court shall choose not to watch and wait for crimes against humanity to be committed and not simply hope for intervention so that it can commence its proceedings. A precedent of sorts was set recently by Carla del Ponte, the prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia, who warned of "genocide" in Congo, in effect demanding intervention under international law.

The prosecutor of the ICC is allowed to initiate investigations *proprio motu*, that is, without any application by the parties involved. But enforcement depends on the cooperation of the state signatories to the Rome statutes. Should the Court and the signatories take up the challenge, Washington's rejection of the Court may become an asset.

Whether it is the United States, the Security Council, the General Assembly or the International Criminal Court, there is no avoiding the state and the domestic interests that guide the decision to act. The shared challenge is to create an informed and mobilized public that can insist on collective state intervention to protect and further the entitlements to peace, justice and freedom, and obstruct state intervention when it is for any other reason. To do so will require a radical transformation of national political and economic institutions. Humanitarian intervention will become that only when democracy deepens as well as spreads.

Zia Mian, a physicist with the Program on Science and Global Security at the Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, is the editor, with Smitu Kothari, of Out of the Nuclear Shadow *(Zed).*

Ronald Steel

Humanitarian intervention is a noble principle easily subject to distortion and abuse. Like other noble principles such as democracy (which often means elections without free choice) or self-determination (which can mean the breakup of an existing multicultural state to favor domination by a single ethnic or religious group), it can be a cover for intolerance and aggression.

Extending the doctrine beyond the prevention of genocide poses a host of problems that well-intentioned people are loath to confront. To adopt Kofi Annan's dictum that "massive and systematic violations of human rights wherever they take place should never be allowed to stand" is merely to begin the question. Who decides what is massive and systematic? The UN, the G8, a "coalition of the willing," the diktat of a dominant state? What if the abuser state is too strong to intimidate? And what if the abuses have the support of the majority of its people—as in Nazi Germany? Or for that matter in the United States, when citizens of Japanese descent were herded into detention camps during World War II?

If humanitarian intervention is to be more than a pious wish for a better world, realistic mechanisms of decision-making and enforcement have to be devised. This means establishing not only an international court with binding authority but an international parliament and constabulary. This involves both a diminishment of sovereignty for individual states and the creation of sovereignty for a global entity that so far is little more than a cliché (the "international community").

While this immense task is being addressed (assuming that powerful states are even willing to address it), we accept some distressing realities:

First, states that intervene for purely humanitarian reasons quickly lose interest and go home (cf. Haiti, Somalia); those that stay almost always have dubious motives.

Second, most egregious offenders of human rights (Nazi Germany, imperial Japan, Soviet Russia) will rarely be deterred by economic sanctions, which are always easy to circumvent. But small fry will, like the murderous thugs of central Africa, who are nourished by international oil and diamond interests.

Third, if you cannot depose the offenders, help the victims. Many, perhaps most, of the Jews of Europe could have been saved in the 1930s had any state been willing to offer them asylum.

Fourth, nation-building is harder and more important than nation-smashing. Just as a marriage is more than a wedding night, humanitarian intervention will work only if there is a long-term commitment to building something better.

Fifth, unintended consequences usually prevail. Humanitarian wars are still wars, even though we clean up their image by calling them "interventions." These invariably create new problems. Among the most common of these are ethnic separatism and communal violence. The Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman empires were arguably more tolerant, just and cosmopolitan than what replaced them.

Sixth, be wary of "democratic" solutions. Democracy is a plant that requires long nourishment and does not take root everywhere. What is important is not that a state be democratic (Athens wasn't) but that it provide justice, equality and dignity for its citizens. Democracy, after all, is not a solution, only a method. To justify military intervention with the purpose of imposing democracy is either a cynical cover for imperialism or an act of irresponsible naïveté. The leaders of great powers are rarely naïve, though their citizens often are. A case in point is that US officials have declared that they will not allow Islamic fundamentalists to take power in Iraq even by free elections.

Enthusiasts of humanitarian intervention would do well to ob-

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serve the first lesson taught to aspiring doctors: Above all, avoid doing harm.

Ronald Steel is professor of international relations at the University of Southern California and author of Temptations of a Superpower *(Harvard).*

Stephen Holmes

The foremost foreign aim of Bush's national security team, in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, has been to re-establish America's damaged reputation for invincibility and to demonstrate the fatal consequences of challenging US power. But voters would not have backed a *son et lumière* invasion of Iraq staged largely to exhibit a don't-mess-with-Texas supremacy. To garner the public support it needed, the Administration had to concoct and market a self-defense rationale, namely, that Iraq was on the verge of a clandestine handoff of WMDs to Al Qaeda and therefore posed an imminent threat to America and Americans.

But if fear of mass-casualty terrorism is the opium of the masses, humanitarian intervention plays a similar role for liberals. The Administration has artfully mobilized disgust at Saddam's sickening atrocities to silence liberal critics of an intervention that had patently nonhumanitarian objectives. (Tom Friedman's recent column in the *New York Times*, presenting mass graves in Iraq as a retroactive *casus belli*, is a case in point.) So how should we be thinking about humanitarian intervention today, after having seen how easy it was for the Administration to steal the liberal agenda, packaging reckless bellicosity as liberation of the oppressed?

First of all, liberals cannot simply ignore the hostile takeover and go on preaching humanitarian intervention with moralistic rhetoric designed to shame doubters into silence. Yes, evil exists. But by treating the war against evil as the noblest aim of international politics, liberals have implicitly licensed our government, when dealing with distant and politically closed societies, to throw evidentiary doubts to the winds and unleash lethal force on the basis of hearsay testimony and circumstantial evidence. The call for humanitarian intervention to remove appallingly cruel regimes legitimizes recourse to otherwise forbidden means. Confidence in our good intentions excuses tunnel vision and a cavalier attitude toward downstream consequences. And single-minded focus on unspeakable atrocities encourages the United States to announce promises that cannot be politically sustained, given domestic political constraints, including the promise to manage the aftermath of interventions in the best interests of ordinary citizens in countries we invade.

Approval by the UN Security Council, moreover, cannot magically transform the war against evil into a legitimate rationale for military intervention. The very hope suggests the bankruptcy of the left, as if we can oppose this Administration's dangerous adventurism only by embracing patently obsolete and ineffective institutions. After all, American unilateralism is to some extent the bitter fruit of dysfunctional multilateralism, the EU's as well as the UN's. Rather than clinging to the dying past, the left should be redefining the liberal international agenda. What we need is applied humanitarianism, without moral posturing. Above all, we should be shouting from the rooftops that the Administration's unidimensionally military response to 9/11 has rendered America less safe, making it more difficult to deal with the two basic threats to our national security, namely proliferation and terrorism. Proliferation can be slowed only by treaty-based security systems, and terrorism can be managed only by international police cooperation, supplemented by policies designed to discredit extremist violence among ordinary citizens, especially in politically unstable Muslim countries. Liberal internationalism should focus on these problems, while also undertaking major initiatives in other areas, such as combating the HIV plague and reducing the domestic subsidies that damage struggling Third World economies.

Opportunistic manipulation of liberal sympathy for the oppressed has tongue-tied potential critics of Bush's foreign policy. But an honorable commitment to humanitarian intervention should not mesmerize the rest of us into supporting a duplicitous Administration bent on erasing the chastening memory of Vietnam, reawakening the latent messianic ambitions of Americans and disguising how hard it is to maintain public oversight of secretive military operations abroad.

Stephen Holmes teaches at the New York University School of Law.

Ramesh Thakur

The traditional "humanitarian intervention" debate focuses more on the intervening state than on the urgent needs of the putative beneficiary of the action. To redress this imbalance, the independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) came up with the notion of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P refocuses the international searchlight on the nation-state's duty to protect its people from murder, rape, starvation and exile. The duty to intervene is activated when a particular state is either unwilling or unable to fulfill its responsibility to protect its people, or is itself the perpetrator of crimes or atrocities, or where populations living outside a particular state are directly threatened by actions taking place there.

ICISS identified just two threshold cases where the atrocities are so grave as to require international intervention: large-scale loss of life or ethnic cleansing, whether actually occurring or imminent (but not retroactive). And it argued that all military interventions must be subject to four precautionary principles: right intention, last resort, proportional means and reasonable prospects. Iraq is unlikely to have passed all four of those tests.

Under R2P principles, only the UN, preferably the Security Council, can authorize the use of military force in the name of the international community. The task therefore is not to evade or circumvent the Council but to make sure that it works better, that it too is held accountable for its responsibility to protect.

In the months before the war on Iraq, the people of the world

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found the US case for war wanting and put their faith in the UN, affirming the centrality and relevance of the world body. But were not the scenes of joy and jubilation in Iraq at the fall of Saddam Hussein an embarrassing indictment of the UN's failure to support the war? Not really. The course and outcome of the war were a strong vindication of the UN. The big story of this war was the lack of proof that Saddam Hussein possessed usable weapons of mass destruction and the fact that he did not pose an imminent threat to regional, US or world security of an urgency and gravity that required instant war to topple him. The UN inspectors could indeed have been given more time and personnel to complete their job.

Moreover, the speed of the victory by the "coalition" vindicates those opponents of the war who argued that Saddam had been so weakened since 1991 that he was not a threat to anyone outside Iraq. To credit the lightning victory to brilliant coalition generalship rather than basic Iraqi weakness is a triumph of spin over substance.

Thus the euphoria in Iraq following Saddam's defeat does not damn the UN's failure to authorize war—unless of course the coalition governments are prepared to admit that their real goal all along was regime change. But that would mean that for six months they engaged in an elaborate charade at the UN in claiming that the issue was the threat posed by Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

The ouster of Saddam flowed from strategic, not ethical, calculations of foreign policy. The liberation of Iraqis is a collateral benefit amid the carnage of destruction to the agreed principles and established institutions of world order. It is difficult to be joyous at the descent from the ideal of a world based on the rule of law to that of the law of the jungle. One can see why the lion would welcome such a change. But how many others are ready to accept the doctrine that the Administration of the day in Washington decides who is to be which country's leader, and who is to be toppled?

Ramesh Thakur, vice rector of the United Nations University in Tokyo and one of the commissioners of ICISS, contributed this as a personal comment. Go to www.iciss-ciise.gc.ca for the full report.

Stephen Zunes

Scores of repressive governments have been toppled in recent decades. The vast majority of these overthrows came about not from foreign invasion or even armed revolution but through massive nonviolent action. Dramatic "people power" uprisings brought down the Communist regimes in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, overthrew Southeast Asian strongmen like Marcos and Suharto, and ousted military juntas from Bangladesh to Bolivia.

Other nonviolent prodemocracy movements engaged in more protracted struggles that eventually forced dramatic reforms in countries as varied as Poland, South Korea, South Africa, Kenya and Chile. The failure of similar rebellions to succeed in other places may have had less to do with any inherent weaknesses in the tactics of nonviolent action than with the failure of these movements to obtain necessary support.

For example, starting in 1990, Albanian Kosovars challenged Serbian rule through one of the most impressive large-scale nonviolent campaigns in history, including the creation of a parallel government and educational system. Yet during eight years of struggle, the United States and most of the world ignored them. The West took interest in their plight only after more radical Kosovars took up arms in 1998, with the "assistance" coming in the form of high-altitude bombing during the spring of 1999. This prompted the Serbs to dramatically escalate their repression against the Albanian Kosovars through large-scale ethnic cleansing. After thousands were killed and tens of thousands were forced from their homes, the war ended on terms that most observers believe could have been reached had the allies been willing to pursue a diplomatic solution.

A year and a half later, in the fall of 2000, nonviolent action by the people of Serbia accomplished in a matter of days what eleven weeks of NATO bombing could not: the ouster of the regime of Slobodan Milosevic.

Could nonviolence have succeeded in Iraq? Most successful nonviolent prodemocracy movements have been centered in the urban middle class and working class. In Iraq, however, thanks to the devastation of the country's civilian infrastructure during the 1991 Gulf War and the draconian economic sanctions that followed, the once-burgeoning middle class was reduced to penury or forced to emigrate and was replaced by a new class of black marketeers who had a stake in preserving the status quo. Furthermore, with sanctions forcing the Iraqi people to become dependent on the regime for rations of badly needed food, medicine and other necessities, people were even less likely to take the already extraordinary risk of challenging it.

Lifting economic sanctions against the people of Iraq—while maintaining sanctions on military equipment and dual-use technologies that could have strengthened the government—might have encouraged such a movement. Instead of backing corrupt exiles with virtually no ties to the Iraqi people, quiet financial and logistical support for democratic elements within the country could have given such a movement a chance to grow. Instead of periodic airstrikes and threats of an invasion, which led people to rally around the flag, demonstrating confidence that the Iraqi people could free themselves would have increased the chances of Saddam Hussein's regime being ousted earlier, without the human and material losses and the anti-American resentment that have resulted from the war.

Nonviolence is not a panacea. For example, if a government is determined to unleash a campaign of genocide against an ethnic minority and has indoctrinated enough of its citizens to support it, outside military intervention may be necessary. However, the power of nonviolent action must be recognized and actively supported before we resign ourselves to the use of military force to end repression.

Stephen Zunes, a professor of politics and chair of the Peace & Justice Studies Program at the University of San Francisco, is the author of Tinderbox: U.S. Middle East Policy and the Roots of Terrorism *(Common Courage) and the editor of* Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective *(Blackwell).*

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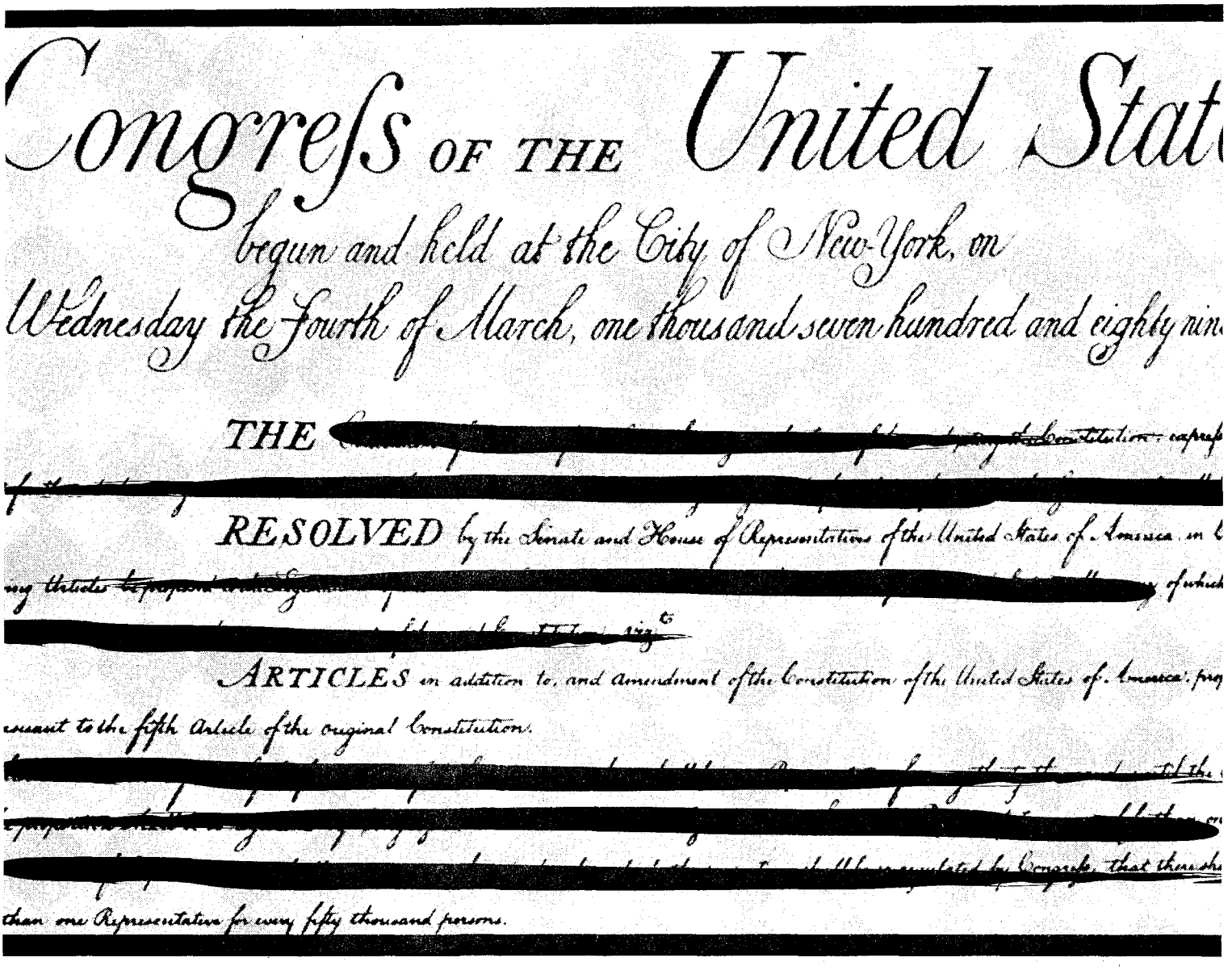
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SEATTLE IS CURBING GREENHOUSE GASES THROUGH MORE EFFICIENT POWER CONSUMPTION.

A Light in the Fog

ALEC APPELBAUM

This article is part of our "What Works" series, which explores effective strategies for improving people's lives through progressive social change. —The Editors

what WORKS

Seattle broke ranks with President Bush in 2001 over climate change. Declaring that every city could lessen the threat that greenhouse gases pose to lives and budgets, then-Mayor Paul Schell promised that by 2003 Seattle's electric company would add no greenhouse-gas emissions to the atmosphere. "We can't afford to wait for the federal government to do this," he said. Bush subsequently parlayed a terrorist assault on America into an invasion of one of the world's prime oil exporters. Evidence continually confirms that greenhouse gases, of which oil and other fossil fuels are prime suppliers, are radically disruptive. Now that the United States has expanded its writ to pump and consume oil, an inspection of what Seattle tried, and how other cities can follow, seems timely.

Some of Schell's promise rested on tricky accounting and local peculiarities, but much of it counted on the widespread adoption of more efficient power consumption. The city-owned electric company, Seattle City Light, pays roughly seventy workers to purge unneeded power consumption from every home, factory and office in town. By tailoring rebates and incentives toward investment in new, efficient equipment (from industrial processors to washing machines), Seattle shows how a city can meaningfully reduce fossil-fuel consumption without disrupting livelihoods. It also poses a question: whether this sensible approach can overtake political resistance in areas where officials mimic Bush's consumption-first ethos.

Seattle makes an ideal testing ground for greenhouse-free electricity. Drawing 82 percent of its power from greenhouse-free rivers and dams, it also boasts a population that has long embraced conservation. Marya Castillano, director of the utility's energy management services, says the idea that led to Schell's promise began in the antinuclear 1970s. City Light workers sold retrofits as ways to spare the utility from having to buy additional nuclear power. And little by little, with a door insulator here (to save heating costs) and a sealed window there (to reduce air conditioning in summer), Seattleites became explicitly conservation-minded.

In the mid-1990s, this political current led the city to apply for federal grants to undertake in-depth projects with corporate partners who wanted to show off their ecological responsibility. Endorsers included the Pike Place Market, a tourist lodestar whose managers upgraded 1,500 light fixtures in five months in 2000, and Macpherson Leather, whose plant acquired long-lived, specially fitted lightbulbs. "This should not be mistaken for a paradigm shift, but at least we made a small impact [on consciousness]," says Jack Brautigam, who ran the program, called Climate Wise. "And with the city continuing to raise the bar, we are getting more companies interested in the climate issue."

The most vivid example of raising the bar was Schell's July 2001 announcement that Seattle would meet or exceed the greenhouse-gas emissions reductions outlined in the Kyoto Protocol, and that City Light would stop adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere entirely. Meanwhile, Climate Wise wound down—its funding covered Brautigam, who has switched to marketing greenhouse-free power to customers—but the city propelled its logic all over town. City Light teams have continued to research, select or market small innovations that seem likely to reduce waste. Their local heroes, says commercial and industrial conservation services chief Jean Shaffer, were manufacturers of ingenious gizmos like the VendingMiser. "They save 35 percent of the energy of a vending machine and keep the pop cold," says Shaffer, with the earnestness common to her peers. The teams adopted the VendingMiser after testing it in the office; it worked so well that the Bonneville Power Administration, a federal agency providing wholesale electricity to utilities in the Pacific Northwest, picked it up. Savings like these positioned Seattle to defend Schell's audacious promise.

When thinking about how to export this model, one must understand its technicalities. The way Seattle honors the pledge can require optimistic logic about how global warming works. The city's power supply now generates 380,000 tons of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas. So Seattle invests in "offsets": The city solicits proposals, then funds efforts to prevent the emission of a corresponding number of tons somewhere else on the planet—for example, energy-efficiency improvements or the propagation of clean fuels. Eventually, Seattle intends to quit fossil fuels; by 2004 it will have acquired 175 megawatts of wind power, which releases no greenhouse gases. "Seattle is presenting a useful model for any city," says K.C. Golden, a project manager at Climate Solutions, an engineering and marketing consulting firm.

But it also presents warnings. After overspending on electricity during the Enron-swollen energy crisis of 2001, City Light is in a weak financial situation. With the budget for conservation consulting and spending reduced this year, Shaffer's annual conservation goal—the amount of energy wastage she hopes to eliminate from businesses—has shrunk from 7.1 average megawatts to 5.6. The offsets program has yet to produce results that can be studied, and the zero-emissions date has slipped to 2005.

Meanwhile, Seattle has embraced one of the strongest long-term strategies: redesigning buildings to use more sunlight and waste less fuel. Governments, as deep-pocketed customers for architects and engineers, can be signal purchasers of "green buildings." The new Seattle Justice Center, according to City Light

Alec Appelbaum, who writes about environmental, civic and business issues, lives in New York City.

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sustainable building coordinator Peter Dobrovolny, recycles the storm water that runs off it and uses vegetation on its roof to lower the need for air conditioning in summer. Dobrovolny says the city has committed to fourteen buildings, representing $800 million in construction activity, with energy-efficient features. The current mayor moved into a City Hall with extensive natural light, systems for reusing water, and showers for biking commuters on June 23. Beyond providing environmentally beneficial prototypes, such buildings invigorate civic architecture and save public dollars by lowering utility bills. Other cities are embracing them too. Landscape architect William McDonough designed a rooftop garden for Chicago's City Hall in 2001, and the Staten Island Ferry Terminal building under construction in Manhattan features panels that conduct solar energy.

But all this—and all of Seattle's ingenuity—will have no atmospheric effect unless much bigger constituencies, like the United States or India and China, enact similar pledges quickly. Greenhouse-gas concentrations know no ZIP code: Wherever they build up, they forge climate instability over the entire planet. Joel Swisher, a principal with the Rocky Mountain Institute energy consultancy, says local programs provide a "laboratory" but no scientific relief. Even so, Burlington, Vermont, has made a pledge similar to Seattle's—with its eyes open. "The hope continues to be that if local governments act, the federal government might follow," says Mayor Peter Clavelle. "There is a level of frustration that without global coordination we'll never get out of this mess, but balancing the frustration is an understanding that we need to clean up our own act." Bush's EPA foresees increased emissions through at least 2012, and the Iraq occupation means that industrialized economies almost certainly will be prejudiced toward greenhouse gases for long enough to do irreparable damage.

Dobrovolny's e-mail signature includes the famous aphorism about how the only thing that has ever changed the world is a small, dedicated group of individuals. Seattleites take note: You can get a $100 rebate if you buy an approved washing machine before July 15. ■

EXCHANGE

CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

indulge his fellow-feeling for the slanderer, so as to strike a pose of gentlemanly fairness. That column was a hit piece, pure and simple—and it has done some harm, as it was meant to do. It was immediately picked up by newsmax.com, the rightist website owned by Richard Mellon Scaife, and spammed throughout the cyberuniverse by Fund's supporters. The lie was cast as reconfirmed because it had been verified (ostensibly) not by another rightist operative but by a major *liberal* magazine. (Among the many hateful e-mails Pillsbury received as a result of Alterman's attack, there was a rather spooky one apparently from Fund himself: "got u gd" was all it said.) Although it's likely that Pillsbury will prevail in court, Alterman has made an ugly situation even uglier by echoing a lot of calumny and spreading bald disinformation, thereby reaffirming public lies. For running such a mean and sloppy piece of work *The Nation* owes its readers an apology. MARK CRISPIN MILLER

ALTERMAN REPLIES

New York City

■ I am deeply disappointed to see Mark Crispin Miller sullying his good name with this attack on my character and my work. It is filled with angry assertions for which he has no evidence, and he deliberately twists my words and actions to the point where no fair-minded observer would recognize them. Responding to each accusation would be pointless. Absolutely everything in my column was verified in advance, and nothing in Miller's hysterical screed will change that unhappy fact. Let him call me all the names he likes. I took no pleasure in defending a journalist with whose views I so profoundly disagree and whose employer, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, has repeatedly attacked my work and my views. I had no ulterior motive in doing so, as John Fund is no friend of mine, and I genuinely feel sorry for Morgan Pillsbury—which explains the gentle tone of my e-mails responding to her repeated requests for my sympathy and advice. What's more, I fully expected the kind of vicious vilification to which I have been subjected since the column was published and of which Miller's letter is perhaps the most lurid example.

If Miller chooses to believe Fund's accuser, despite her being, by her own admission, a liar and a fantasist, unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality, and having retracted these same claims in documents signed by her own hand and in some cases also notarized, well, that's his privilege. But many of these documents are online at www.johnfund.com, and have been since before I wrote my column. Moreover, I announced this fact and pointed readers to them on my website (www.altercation.msnbc.com) months ago.

These include the one Miller calls "either nonexistent or a forgery"—titled, "Handwritten undated letter to the Wall Street Journal." (And by the way, this one claims exactly the opposite of the letter to which Miller refers. In it, Pillsbury admits to making up the accusations, rather than reiterating the claim that "Fund was beating her.") The one in which he claims it is "impossible to tell what Pillsbury really meant—nor is that statement something we might check" is titled, "Deposition Transcript dated February 22, 2001 in the case of Pillsbury-Foster v. Franklin, Civil Action No. 233136 (Cal. Super Ct.)."

Miller could easily have checked them himself had he wished before so recklessly casting himself as Pillsbury's rabid attack dog. Had he bothered, he would have found the following statements in Pillsbury's own words: (1) "I have made accusations to the Jersey City police that John Fund, whom I have known for three years, was physically abusive at times in the recent past. Those statements were not true. Mr. Fund has not been abusive to me contrary to what I said in reports to the Jersey City police." (2) "There were never any wedding plans between Fund and I." (3) "I, Morgan Pillsbury, have been struggling with emotional problems for some time. I have trouble distinguishing between reality and fantasy.... [I]n recent weeks, I have claimed that John was abusive to me. John was not abusive." (4) In a sworn deposition related to a case in which she admits to trying to bilk her stepfather out of $10,000 for imaginary heart surgery, Pillsbury explains that she suffers from a "borderline personality disorder. One of the symptoms of this condition is an inability to discriminate truth from fiction." In that same deposition, in response to the question, "What lies had you told in the past?" she answers, "Too many to name." Pillsbury also admits that by June 1998, she was having "severe emotional problems" and "was entirely nonfunctional." She further states that she has "told whoppers [lies] all her life."

We know what Pillsbury's excuses are, as cruel—but, owing to Miller's letter, necessary—as it may be to rehash them yet again. But what, for goodness' sake, are Miller's?

Nobody knows what happened between Fund and Pillsbury except the two of them. The only conclusion of which I am absolutely certain is that it would be morally and journalistically irresponsible for any of us to convict Fund of the crimes of which Pillsbury accuses him, given her subsequent retractions and previous history, based on the evidence now publicly available. One reason I decided to write the column—which as I noted, was attacked in an e-mail to *The Nation*'s editor before I had even set a single word to paper—was to demonstrate that the left could be honest about itself and its own failings. Miller's wild ravings demonstrate just how unpopular an exercise that can be. I retract nothing. ERIC ALTERMAN

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COMMENT

(Continued From Page 7)

as Cook told the Foreign Affairs Committee, the unique intelligence relationship between Britain and America makes it almost impossible to tell which country is responsible for which raw data. Passing the buck is a time-honored trick for dazzling the punters. Here, the spooks have made stern noises to the government about the misuse of intelligence; Blair's loyal bulldogs have revived the specter of MI5's traditional hostility to Labour by denouncing "rogue elements" in the intelligence services. When it comes to secrets, prime ministers and presidents will always have a trump card up their sleeves. All that opponents of the war can do is follow the cards we do see as they flash across the ocean.

At the beginning of his first term, the millions who voted for Blair hoped they could at least trust him to save the schools and health service, to soften the blows of capital, to govern honestly. That illusion has been long dead; the Iraq war was the last nail in its coffin. A June poll gives Labour a lead of only four points over the laughably incompetent Tories; a third of those questioned said they had lost faith in the government over Iraq, and more than half said Labour had deliberately exaggerated the risk from Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. The future, such as it is, must now depend on Blair's rebel angels—the increasingly vociferous crowd of former ministers gathering on the back benches who look to Europe before Washington and who still carry a torch for democracy, or something like the socialism that dares not speak its name.

MARIA MARGARONIS

Maria Margaronis writes from The Nation*'s London bureau.*

Missed Conception

Hawaii recently became the fifth state to make emergency contraception, also known as the morning-after pill, available directly from pharmacists. This is far from a small regulatory change. It means that next time it's 2 o'clock on a Friday night and the condom breaks, a woman there won't have to wait until the following Monday to find a doctor to write a prescription and then wait to get the prescription filled. She can go directly to her neighborhood pharmacist.

When taken within days after unprotected sex, emergency contraception—higher doses of birth control pills—can dramatically reduce the risk of pregnancy. But the pills should be used within seventy-two hours, and the sooner the better.

Pharmacies are located in every community, and many are open twenty-four hours a day. And cutting out a trip to the doctor means that the pills, at about $25 a dose, will be more accessible to the uninsured. In Washington State, pharmacies dispense more than 1,500 doses of emergency contraception a month. By contrast, very few gynecologists write more than five prescriptions for emergency contraception each year.

Studies show that most sexually active women use contraception, but no method is foolproof. Emergency contraception has the potential to transform women's lives by giving them a second chance to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. The pharmacy-access model has proven so successful in Washington and California that legislators in fourteen more states are now trying to replicate the program. These efforts have been gaining ground steadily in spite of the conservative political climate. Unlike RU-486, which triggers an abortion, the morning-after pill prevents conception and is opposed only by those antichoice groups that oppose all forms of birth control, including the pill. Experts estimate that emergency contraception averted 51,000 abortions in 2000 alone and that wider use of it in the United States could reduce the number of unintended pregnancies by almost half.

But emergency contraception is almost the story that wasn't. In 1996, more than twenty years after researchers discovered that higher doses of birth control pills could prevent conception after sex, women still had no dedicated product. So frustrated public-health advocates petitioned the FDA to require manufacturers to repackage their birth control pills for use as emergency contraception—or at least to enclose instructions about how to use the regular pills for this purpose. These efforts were steadfastly resisted.

Introducing products was left to the tiny startup Gynetics, whose Preven was approved in 1998, and Women's Capital Corporation, formed by women's health advocates, whose Plan B was approved in 1999. Lacking the resources of major drug companies, both outfits relied instead on activists to promote their products through grassroots education campaigns, hotlines that connect prescribers with clients and policy initiatives like those in Hawaii, Alaska, California, Washington and New Mexico.

The reluctance of pharmaceutical companies to embrace innovative products that could change women's lives is not limited to emergency contraception. Women make up an increasing majority of those who are HIV-infected. But twenty-two years into the epidemic, most women still must rely on men to use a condom or abstain from having sex to protect themselves. No major drug company is developing a product women can use on their own. Once again, it has fallen to the public sector and women's advocacy efforts to jump-start the R&D process for potential HIV microbicides—gels, creams or suppositories that women can apply without men ever having to know. Small university labs and biotech firms have produced some sixty microbicide candidates, but they're languishing in the pipeline for lack of a Big Pharma backer.

Giant drug companies are generally risk-averse, but much more so when there's even a whiff of political controversy, as is often the case with products linked to women's reproductive health. And the government, currently obsessed with abstinence, is not doing what it should to subsidize this R&D either.

Such political and commercial squeamishness is not only unwarranted, it endangers women's health. More than 60 million American women are in their childbearing years, and more than half want to avoid pregnancy. Worldwide, nearly 5,000 women a day become infected with HIV. All women deserve access to the safest, most effective technologies to protect their health and well-being. It's time for the government and the private sector to give women the prevention products they need and want.

KIRSTEN MOORE

Kirsten Moore is president of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Everything Expert

ROBERT S. BOYNTON

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER: A Memoir and a Message.
By Amitai Etzioni.
Rowman & Littlefield. 460 pp. $35.

Toward the end of his memoir, *My Brother's Keeper*, Amitai Etzioni recounts meeting with the political consultant Dick Morris. Morris has recently been banished from the White House for consorting with an eavesdropping, toe-sucking prostitute (Or was he the sucker? I can never keep that straight.) Morris wants to cowrite a memo on communitarianism with Etzioni with which to wheedle his way into Al Gore's good graces in time for the 2000 election. Morris is in rehabilitation mode, and in the middle of their meeting, the multitasking Machiavelli conducts a brief phone interview with a Christian radio station. "Yes there was a spiritual vacuum in the White House.... I contributed to it." When asked what religion he practices, Morris replies that he plays the field. "I work for both parties. Would you expect me to sign up with one religion? I atone in all of them."

The anecdote is puzzling in more ways than one. What leader of a moral social movement would bother to meet with an apparatchik like Morris, especially after he had been so thoroughly disgraced? Even more puzzling is why Morris would want to meet with Etzioni, the "guru" of the nebulous communitarian movement. I would suggest that the answer to the first question tells us a lot about Etzioni, while the answer to the second reveals the secret of communitarianism's success in the early 1990s.

The Zelig of public intellectuals—*Time* magazine once dubbed him "The Everything Expert"—Etzioni has weighed in on nearly every major policy debate of the past forty years. In addition to founding the communitarian movement, he has written several well-regarded academic texts and dabbled in politics. He was a senior adviser in the Carter White House (where he learned "the difference between being a public intellectual out on the hustings as compared to being a member of the king's entourage") and has been credited with influencing the centrist, "Third Way" positions of the Democratic Leadership Council, and of Bill Clinton and Tony Blair.

Etzioni's disparate projects coalesced in 1990. The central idea of communitarianism—which he expounds on in *The Spirit of Community: Rights, Responsibilities and the Communitarian Agenda* (1993), *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society* (1997) and *Next: The Road to the Good Society* (2001)—is that a society must balance liberal rights with community responsibilities. Harvard Law professor Mary Ann Glendon has likened communitarianism to "democracy's environmentalist movement, helping to heighten awareness of the political importance and endangered condition of the seedbeds of civic virtue." Communitarians conceive of society as a three-legged stool, held up by the forces of the state, the market and, yes, the community. They are skeptical of the rights-oriented, legalistic, interest-group politics of the liberal state. A precursor to the "third way" movements of recent years, communitarians want to "leapfrog the old debate between left and right and focus on the role of the community, culture, and virtues rather than on either the private sector or the government," Etzioni writes.

The Zelig of public intellectuals, Amitai Etzioni has weighed in on nearly every major policy debate of the past forty years.

A nice theory, but how does a movement that eschews "politics as usual" (rights, laws, etc.) go about changing societal values? Rather than coercing behavior via laws, communitarians advocate using one's "moral voice" to persuade fellow citizens through shame and appeals to community

Robert S. Boynton, head of the Graduate Magazine Journalism Program at New York University, is writing a book about contemporary literary journalism.

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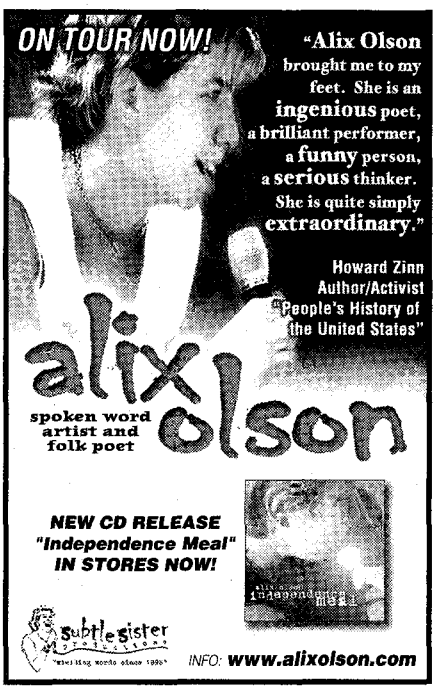
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norms. "Communities lead with their moral voice, appreciating those who act responsibly, and chastising those who do not," Etzioni writes.

The movement's policy recommendations run the gamut—depending on your perspective—from innocuous do-gooderism to authoritarian intrusiveness. Communitarians advocate mandatory national service, campaign finance reform, the two-parent family, sobriety checkpoints and drug-testing for people (like engineers and pilots) whose jobs give them tremendous public responsibility. More controversially, communitarians advocate covenant marriages—in which a couple agrees to participate in marital counseling and delay divorce for a few years if one partner files for it—as a way to "encourage" (a word communitarians use a lot) family stability. Furthermore, they argue that people at high risk for HIV should be tested, and if the results are positive, should be encouraged to inform their previous and prospective sexual partners.

While not on the same philosophical level as the communitarian writings of Michael Walzer, Michael Sandel, Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor, Etzioni's work has provided the most sustained institutional response to the liberal individualist project, of which John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* is the most powerful expression. Much like the neoconservative movement from which he says he takes inspiration, Etzioni is more interested in influencing policy than philosophy. To paraphrase Irving Kristol, Etzioni is a liberal who was "mugged" by community.

As the age of Reagan waned, Etzioni sensed that

> a reaction was setting in to the excessive individualism that neoconservatives and their followers helped to foment. The country was yearning for a less one-sided way of thinking, a third way between the worshipers of the market and state-hipped liberals and an approach that would not ignore core social-moral values. To effectively respond, the American renewal project needed a school rather than merely individual thinkers, each working on his or her own.

To this end, he founded a journal, *The Responsive Community: Rights and Responsibilities*, which is published under the auspices of the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies of The George Washington University, where Etzioni is a university professor. In 1991 he published "The Communitarian Platform," which announced the movement's principles. And he surrounded himself with an impressive group of thinkers: Mary Ann Glendon, an expert on family law and civil rights; William Galston, a political scientist at the University of Maryland, who was issues director for Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign and Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy under Clinton; the political theorist Benjamin Barber; the ethicist James Fishkin. Over the past decade, Etzioni & Co. (the names above, as well as Robert Bellah, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Nathan Glazer, Martha Minow and others) have churned out hundreds of books, monographs, position papers and editorials, while also sponsoring dozens of panels and conferences across the country.

In a sense, the story of communitarianism is the story of Amitai Etzioni—a story that might itself have been lifted from the pages of a Leon Uris novel. Smuggled from Germany in 1934, the 5-year-old Werner Falk (as Etzioni was born) moved from Italy to Greece, and finally, in 1937, to Haifa, where he thrived in the communal life of a kibbutz. His father fought against Hitler under the auspices of Great Britain's Jewish Brigade, and young Amitai—his adopted name was created by fusing the Hebrew words "truth" (*emet*), "tree" (*etz*) and "Israel" (*Zion*)—did his part by smuggling fleeing European Jews into Palestine. In March 1947, at age 18, he attended a meeting where David Ben-Gurion announced, "The time is right for us to take the ultimate risk and demand and fight for the formation of a full-blown state." Writing in his diary, Etzioni wavered between dedicating his life to "riches and status" or to "service for the common good." Soon after, he quit school and led a platoon in the Palmach (the commando unit of the Haganah) in the fight for Israel's independence. (Two-thirds of his unit were either killed or wounded defending Jerusalem.) His first book, *A Diary of a Commando Soldier* (a collection of newspaper columns he wrote during the war), was a bestseller. The 21-year-old Etzioni had discovered his public voice.

Lacking a high school diploma, Etzioni had difficulty finding a university that would admit him after the war. Luckily, Martin Buber was looking for students to attend his new institute. In addition to studying Kabbalah with Gershon Scholem, Etzioni worked with Buber himself, and was profoundly influenced by the philosopher's notion of "dialogue" ("a give-and-take during which people open up and reach each other profoundly"), as well as his famous distinction between "I-Thou" rela-

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tionships (treating others as fellow human beings) and "I-It" relationships (treating others as objects). Later, while studying sociology at Hebrew University, Etzioni discovered the concept of "anomie," the condition of spiritual aimlessness that Durkheim argued was the result of modernity's loss of social fabric. The essential concepts of communitarianism were in place.

Etzioni arrived in Berkeley in 1957. Eighteen months later—having received a PhD in sociology in record time—he landed a job at Columbia, home to the legendary sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton, as well as the iconoclastic C. Wright Mills. Although Etzioni's scholarly work was well within the confines of 1950s quantitative social science (his first book was titled *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations*), his activism soon got him into trouble with his more "value neutral" colleagues. After Lazarsfeld called him onto the carpet for writing a review of the art film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* ("The last thing we need is another C. Wright Mills," he scolded), Etzioni concluded that the "images from Hiroshima sufficed to confirm my belief that humanity could not possibly do without my administering to it." He vowed to become a scholar and an activist, a public intellectual. "Here I stand; I can do no other," he announced to his wife, invoking Luther.

It is in the sections in *My Brother's Keeper* on his career as a public intellectual that Etzioni's memoir is most revealing. He is clearly a man who revels in the wonkish public-policy battles that take place beyond the seminar room (which was one of the reasons he moved to DC's George Washington University). And he is clearly a man of conviction—the "conviction" typically being that he is correct, his ideas on "the side of the angels." But it isn't enough to be right; it drives him crazy when he isn't credited for his insights. He writes, "I was pissed about those occasions in which I had been able to see around the corner—on matters of considerable public import—but for which my observations were not appreciated. Why do many people find such claims so annoying?" (I wonder.) Unlike most public intellectuals, Etzioni isn't satisfied merely to pen the occasional editorial, write a crossover book and appear on television. He yearns for "the special high that I tasted in Israel, of participating in a project that was larger than life, greater than self. For accomplishments that changed something in the real world."

Etzioni's memoir is replete with examples of his intellectual activism. In 1962 he implores Martin Buber to ask Pope John XXIII to defuse the Cuban missile crisis by placing calls to John F. Kennedy and Fidel Castro. Etzioni opposed the Vietnam War (*Winning Without War*, 1964) and railed against the diversion of money from the War on Poverty to space exploration (*The Moondoggle: Domestic and International Implications of the Space Race*, 1964). In 1968 he and his colleagues formed a human chain around one of the buildings occupied by protesting students at Columbia University, where he was a sociology professor. His 1973 critique of the budding bioengineering movement (*Genetic Fix: The Next Technological Revolution*) was nominated for the National Book Award. More recently, he has weighed in on campaign finance reform (*Capital Corruption: The New Attack on American Democracy*, 1984), privacy (*The Limits of Privacy*, 1999) and race (*The Monochrome Society*, 2001).

Etzioni cuts a Loman-esque figure, hawking his communitarian wares to anyone who will listen but finding precious few buyers.

Academic departments are often ranked by the number of times faculty work is cited in scholarly journals, and the pecking order of policy advisers depends on the power of their advisees. But how is one to gauge a public intellectual's effectiveness? In *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline* (2002), Richard Posner analyzed the "public intellectual market" using data provided by Amazon.com rankings and popular press citations. Posner considers the public intellectual a kind of intellectual soothsayer who should be judged by how often his "predictions" hit the mark (utopians need not apply). I didn't think anyone took Posner's suggestions seriously until I read Etzioni's memoir. In it, he provides exhaustive accounts of the reviews his books receive, as well as summaries—and quantitative analyses—of communitarianism's press coverage. For Etzioni, the medium is the message. He believes that evidence of communitarianism's influence lies in the number of times its "keywords" appear. "In the 1990s, the phrase 'rights and responsibilities' appeared some 6,183 times in the top fifty newspapers alone," he writes. These were Etzioni's Golden Years. "For months on end, we seemed to be on the front of most everyone's Rolodex."

The second half of his memoir is a cautionary tale for all would-be public intellectuals. I suspect Etzioni never recovered from his stint as a "member of the king's entourage" in the Carter White House, and has spent much of his energy since then trying to whisper in the ear—any ear!—of those in power. "The trick was to find ideas that were both honestly communitarian and not impolitical." Some trick, indeed.

While Etzioni's dealings with Clinton and Blair have been well documented, in his memoir it becomes clear that Etzioni's criteria for offering advice depend less on ideology than access. We witness him regress from a passionate intellectual to a Loman-esque figure, desperately hawking his communitarian wares to anyone who will listen. He tries to sell communitarianism to Helmut Kohl (not interested), Bob Dole ("There was no sign of their Christian spirit, that of reaching out and caring for vulnerable members of the community, which is so much a part of the values they were anxious to uphold." Shocking!), and George W. Bush ("His tone and demeanor were often soft and conciliatory; that is, communitarian"). Etzioni implores Janet Reno to rethink her commitment to the Fourth Amendment (she demurs).

Etzioni's media profile faded in the late 1990s. The communitarian message didn't feel so fresh, and some of its policies seemed downright creepy. Despite Etzioni's embrace of Buberian "dialogue," his presentations felt more like monologues: No matter what the subject, "balancing rights and responsibilities" was always the answer. In 1994 the *Guardian* asked, "Is Etzioni just a Jerry Falwell in cap and gown? Could communitarianism be a thinking person's Moral Majority?" Etzioni dutifully records that the movement's media citations peak in the mid-1990s. "By the late 1990s, there were more and more days, then weeks, when no one called. Invitations to speak and to attend conferences ceased to pose scheduling problems; there were no longer any who wanted me to be in two places at the same time."

Much of the difficulty had to do with his "third way" communitarian message. The political blood-sport of the Clinton era made Etzioni's plea for nonpartisanship sound naïve, if not disingenuous. If Clinton could gut welfare while simultaneously praising communitarianism ("You *are* my inspiration," Clinton told Etzioni one New Year's Eve), maybe the movement was more style than substance. Were communitarian ideas merely protective coloration for politicians of the left and right? Was a movement

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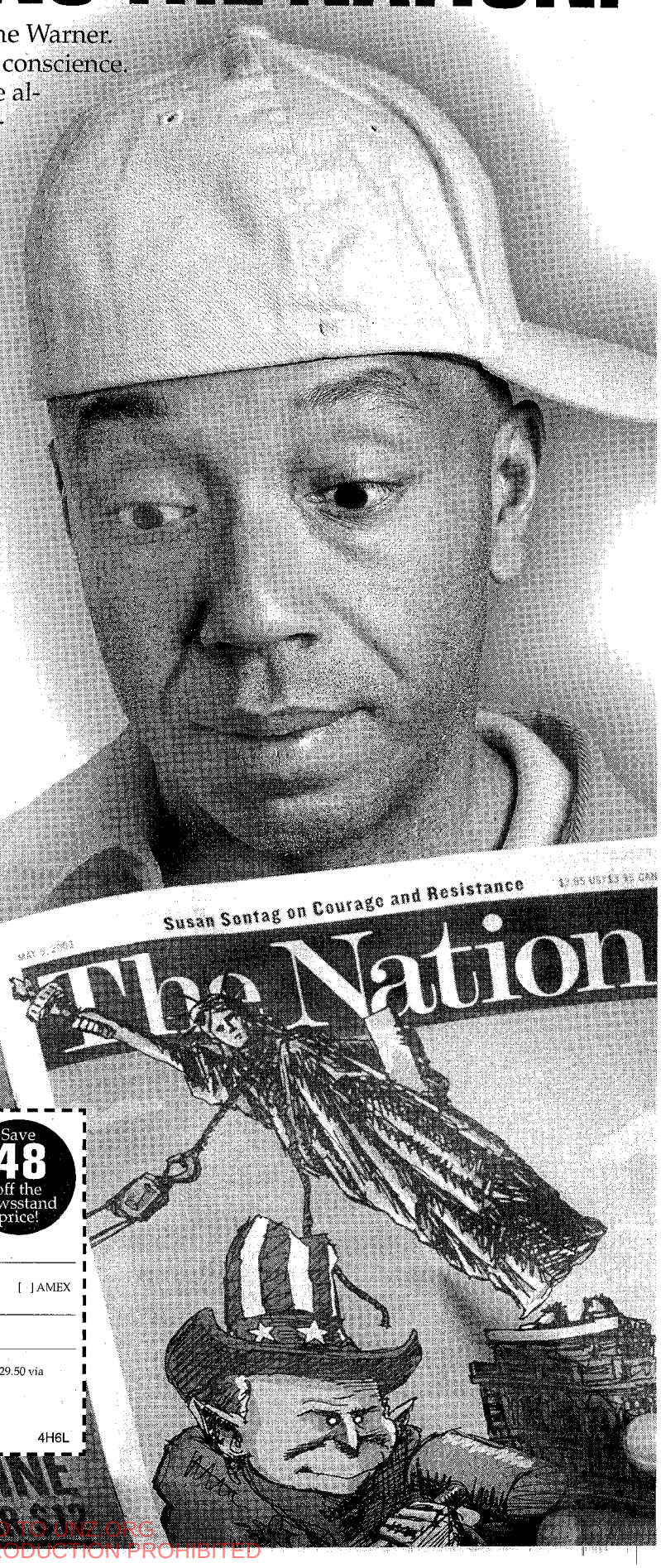

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admired by Bill Bennett, Dick Morris and George W. Bush itself worth admiring?

And the more closely people considered Etzioni's proposals, the more it became apparent that many were either stunningly obvious ("If the advocates of civil rights and those of public safety would stop butting heads, we would see all kind of ways to advance our security while minimizing intrusions on our liberty") or absurdly utopian (a "megalogue" on values between members of a super "community of communities"). Wish-and-make-it-so public policy.

I think the reason communitarianism never had the impact of, say, neoconservativism has to do with its message as well as its method of implementing its ideas. Communitarianism speaks the language of reform, not revolution. It seeks to temper the primacy of the individual, to tame the logic of the market, to alleviate our reliance on government and its laws. It is more "liberalism rightly understood" than an ideology in its own right. Etzioni is less a prophet for a new idea than a publicist for a worthy, but not particularly novel, point of view.

Toward the end of *My Brother's Keeper*, he describes his relations with the Clintons: Hillary, who cites him in *It Takes a Village to Raise a Child*, and Bill, who casually leaves a copy of Etzioni's book, *The Spirit of Community*, on his Oval Office desk during a visit by the press. It "was one more sign, to put it grandly, that these ideas were in step with history." Not ahead, and not behind. And that, ultimately, is the problem.■

Secrets and Lies

PHILIP WEISS

AN EXECUTION IN THE FAMILY: One Son's Journey.
By Robert Meeropol. St. Martin's. 273 pp. $25.95.

You would hope that the passage of fifty years might have cleared the passions that once inflamed the Rosenberg case. The end of the cold war has cooled the ideological battles, and many of the factual questions that once divided the parties seem to have been resolved. Julius Rosenberg was a Soviet spy; the evidence against Ethel was flimsy; judge and prosecutor were overzealous and broke the law themselves. So now maybe the personal issues at the center of the dramatic case might be examined.

This is the task that Robert Meeropol, the younger of the Rosenbergs' two sons, has taken on in his earnest memoir, *An Execution in the Family*, published to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the execution. His subject is his parents' political and psychological legacy, and his efforts to come to terms with it. The writer's manner and position at once command sympathy and respect. For Meeropol has led a worthy life, now as the head of a foundation, called the Rosenberg Fund for Children, that helps children of activists who have been targeted by the law. A man who loves the company of children and mistrusts the state has found the right job.

It wasn't easy getting there.

He was 3 and his brother 7 when their parents were jailed in 1950. The Rosenbergs' extended family shunned the boys, and they spent months in a shelter before landing in the upper Manhattan home of Abel and Anne Meeropol, who were members of the Rosenbergs' Old Left community. The Meeropols adopted the boys and brought them up in a loving and generous way. As a youth, Robert Meeropol says, he faced two great challenges. One was being identified as a Rosenberg son, something that could destroy his privacy and deeply complicate his life. He deceived even close friends till his mid-20s, when he joined a lawsuit against the author Louis Nizer over Nizer's use of Rosenberg letters in a book on the case. On June 19, 1973, the twentieth anniversary of their parents' deaths, Robert and Michael Meeropol identified themselves publicly.

The other challenge was political. All four of his parents were Old Leftists, Abel Meeropol so die-hard he was unfazed by revelations of Stalin's crimes. "I sprang from that party-line tradition," Robert writes. Yet he also rebelled against that tradition, with its emphasis on disciplined, peaceful organizing among the working class, gravitating toward the revolutionary spontaneity of the New Left. In the late 1960s he took part in militant actions at the University of Michigan. Abel Meeropol was fearful about the risks Robert was taking. "I'm afraid I'll never see you again," he said, and before long the author, by then married and forming a very stable family of his own, came to share his fear. In the end he chose to continue his radical political activities, but in a legal way. "My childhood experience had fostered a political ethic that was at the core of my being.... I needed to be a troublemaker."

This book, however, is subtitled "One Son's Journey," and the deeper quest here is of a psychological and spiritual character. Perhaps inevitably, Robert and Michael Meeropol became heirs to their parents' effort to establish their innocence. In 1975 the boys published the book *We Are Your Sons*, combining their own stories with excerpts of their parents' jailhouse letters, and asserting that the Rosenbergs had been framed because their radical political beliefs had elicited McCarthyite hysteria. For a time, Robert gave public lectures demolishing the government's evidence point by point.

But by 1988, Meeropol writes, the murmurings of older allies of his parents brought him to understand that his father was guilty of some form of espionage, just not what Julius and Ethel were convicted of. "My new position was uncertain and complicated," he writes. He stopped giving lectures. "As long as I remained in the background, I would not have to voice my doubts about my parents' case publicly, and I could develop a life that moved beyond being their son."

The end of the cold war brought new information. Former Soviet agents said that Julius, an electrical engineer formerly in the Army Signal Corps, was an asset, and the American government released National Security Agency files of decoded Soviet cables showing that Julius had been a spy, using the code name Antenna and providing the Soviets with military secrets.

It would be hard to imagine a more deeply moving story about a son losing his blindness about his parents. Yet *An Execution in the Family* describes that territory without fully exploring it. The idea of a memoir as a "journey" owes something to various 1990s experiments in freeing unconscious pain, but Meeropol's writerly training is as a foundation executive, and his descriptions of his inner life often sound programmatic. The childhood nightmare would seem to have cauterized him. "I can't remember ever crying about their executions as a child.... I never cried about anything," he says, and his future wife almost

Philip Weiss is a New York writer preparing a book about a death in the Peace Corps in 1976.

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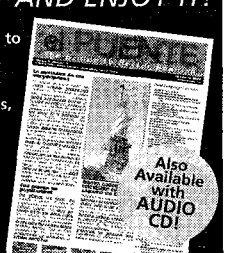

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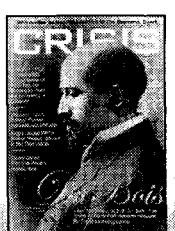

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abandoned their relationship because of its "emotional poverty." A reader undergoes similar privations here.

I should have liked the author to have taken greater risks. For instance, he might have revisited Sing Sing, the scene of his parents' last years and death, to try to uncover his childhood feelings. In *The Book of Daniel*, E.L. Doctorow's 1971 novel that is told by the son of the "Isaacsons," the narrator says, "I suppose you think I can't do the electrocution," before a horrifying description of that scene. I never need to read that again, but I would like to know what Meeropol thinks about when he thinks about his parents' death.

As it is, the only primal screams here are directed at Meeropol's uncle, David Greenglass, a confessed spy inside Los Alamos, whose testimony that his sister and brother-in-law were co-conspirators helped send them to the chair. Even hearing about Greenglass, Meeropol says, "is like taking a bath in sewage." He elaborates: "Sometimes religious Jews mourn the 'death' of someone who has committed an unforgivable act, going so far as to sit shiva for him. What Greenglass did is unforgivable, and I've removed him from my life with similar finality."

The reader wishes he had overcome those feelings. Elsewhere in this book, in making a persuasive argument against the death penalty, Meeropol says that the rage felt by the victims' families can be lanced by reconciliation rituals in which killers express remorse. I hope that he is right. But, fifty years later, he is still in too much pain to contemplate reconciliation with the uncle he has condemned to spiritual death (and don't let anyone tell you Jewish voodoo doesn't work).

What if he had approached Greenglass, and tested his belief in our "common humanity" by at least attempting to remove the labels of Wretched and Righteous that are worn by Greenglass and himself? In the process he might have reached a deeper understanding of who his parents were.

Julius and Ethel are the missing characters in this book. Such vivid and astonishing characters they were, too! Julius the sliest and ballsiest Jew ever to walk Delancey Street, sending his wife a note to say "Honey we have a license and we should be allowed to set up housekeeping" in the Death House together. Ethel with her thumpingly grandiose literary style and brand loyalty to Commissary cream cheese behind bars. Ethel emerged as sexy and neurotic in *Ethel*, a 1990 novel by Tema Nason, but here she remains an abstraction, and this speaks to the largest problem in Meeropol's book, and maybe also in the case as it echoes today.

Yes, the government was perfidious. There were unethical meetings among judges and prosecutors, who were rattled by all sorts of fevers, from 1950s anti-Communism to the assimilationist desire of professional Jews to demonstrate their loyalty by publicly sacrificing two of their radical working-class brethren. The Rosenbergs are the only people in American history who've been executed for spying. Others found guilty of similar crimes drew far lighter sentences.

But those are old stories. This year the fiftieth anniversaries of the scaling of Everest and the discovery of the double helix seem far more relevant to our lives than poor Julius and Ethel's belief in the triumph of the proletariat—even with John Ashcroft running the Justice Department. And yet a very contemporary issue does throb inside this book: Can the Rosenbergs' son criticize his parents?

The Rosenbergs did what most parents do: They lied to their kids about who they were. Had they been permitted to live to a mature age, maybe they would have come clean. As it was, their martyrdom has functioned as a kind of psychic amber for their children's thinking. However heroic they were to refuse to cooperate with the Feds and thereby accept their fate, however much that bravery resonates in their sons' political choices, the Rosenberg children have struggled with those lies for a great part of their lives.

It is stunning to consider that Meeropol was 28 when he wrote rather edgily, along with his brother, in the book *We Are Your Sons*: "Recent investigations have permitted us to conclude that our parents probably were members of the American Communist Party."

Did their parents owe them greater sincerity about such a basic question? Even sealed sincerity? Even the convict Abel Magwitch managed to be more honest with his heir, Pip, in *Great Expectations*.

Robert Meeropol circles the matter restlessly. At a gathering he organizes of the children of political prisoners, a child asks Meeropol why he is not angrier. He thinks she means angrier at the state, and explains that he has gotten over his murderous feelings toward the people who killed his parents.

Then he realizes, "She meant, 'Why wasn't I angry with my parents for the choices they had made?'"

But he quickly rationalizes the issue: "I am proud of my parents even if they

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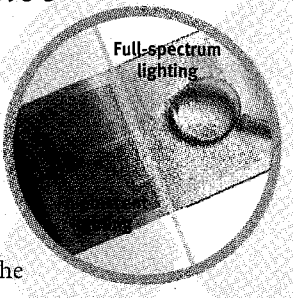

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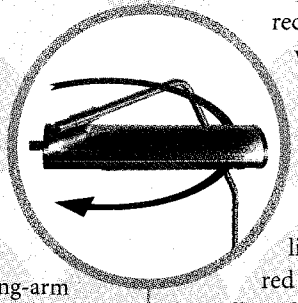

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may not have been unequivocally innocent. They acted with integrity, courage, and in furtherance of righteous ideals."

That's not really an answer, it's political speech. At some level, Robert Meeropol still seems to retain a 6-year-old's idealization of his parents.

Who were these people? What combination of ideology and fortitude made the spy and his helpmate maintain their silence? By some abridgment of that silence, could the couple have saved Ethel's life?

Meeropol doesn't ask that question (and condemns Ethel's mother, Tessie, for venturing such issues in a famous visit to Ethel). He has declined one of the gifts of the journeying age: We're permitted to rage at our parents and thereby come to terms with the emotional damage they created in our lives. The sensitive are compelled to do so, to work their way through to fuller expression.

Of course, Robert Meeropol didn't actually decline that gift; the state denied it to him. And in this sense, the son's long struggles add weight to the lesson offered long ago by the bigger controversies of the case: The death penalty only sows confusion. ■

White Teeth

MICHAEL WOOD

MORTALS. By Norman Rush. Knopf. 721 pp. $26.95.

Norman Rush's first novel, *Mating* (1991), opens with a nervous but gripping epigram: "In Africa, you want more, I think." The speaker, an unnamed American anthropologist who doesn't want to return to the United States, quickly explains what she means, or rather who she means. "Obviously I mean whites in Africa and not black Africans. The average black African has the opposite problem: he or she doesn't want enough." She should know better—she does know better—than to think of "the average black African," but she is trying to get started and she needs to simplify. "There are more whites in Africa than you might expect," she tells us a page or so later, and they all want something, they all want more. They are development experts, fugitives, diplomats, anthropologists, hunters, members of the Peace Corps, colonials who can't go home. Africa is never just an allegory in Rush's work. There is too much local, untranslatable detail for that: too much heat, too many snakes and insects, too much immediate history and politics, too many nicely noted speech patterns and minutely recognized individual people. And there are too many diverse Africans for the books to be just about whites. But a series of white experiences of Africa, and especially of the Kalahari Desert, a place where the soul is scoured and searched, dominates the adventures Rush recounts. These people want more than they would in another continent; and frequently they lose everything in their attempt to get it. It is only a slight exaggeration to say they are, in the words of a character in his new novel, *Mortals*, "at their wit's end every minute."

Rush is not afraid to evoke and to practice what, in a 1992 lecture, he called "the high art of the serious novel." It offers, he says, along with the equally high art of the serious short story, "the least constrained representation of life achievable in any communicative form." The implied constraints are those of genre and formula, since "serious" in our literary lexicon has come to mean lacking obvious or rigid rules. Of course, the word "representation" does leave a lot of leeway, and in the same lecture Rush speaks of "imagined lives" that are "variously angled, cropped, elongated, arranged with aesthetic cunning." In his first book, *Whites* (1986), a collection of six edgy short stories, he angles and crops, mainly; in his two novels, *Mating* and now *Mortals*, he angles and elongates. There is a certain amount of aesthetic cunning everywhere, but it is paired with a curious and attractive indifference to the milder preoccupations of art: elegance, consistency of tone, tidiness of shape. Some readers may feel the sheer sprawl of *Mortals* is a disappointment after the earlier work, but my sense is that the attractions and slippages of Rush's writing, at least in the novels, are a single package: You have to admire the verve and scope of the enterprise, but you can hardly ignore the waves of what looks like silliness.

High art for Rush is entirely compatible with cheerful low jokes; and his serious novels are full of frivolities. What's serious is how much these jokes and frivolities matter to the characters, and how intensely Rush is prepared to document whatever matters to them. If, like the hero of *Mortals*, you were a man who had lost his much-loved wife, you might well, when you were not obsessing about her lover, worry about who is going to tell you when your nose hairs need cutting, and you might also—rather more of a stretch, this—think with gratitude of her constant care of her teeth and yours, going so far as to call her, in memory, your "fantastically flossing beloved." Teeth are important in *Mating* too. The already quoted narrator is identified as a smart person because she knows what bruxism is ("grinding your teeth at night"), and boasts about her dental hygiene. "I attend to my gums," she says. She is also good at slicing onions. "I slice very thin and I slice very fast. It's a gift I have."

Is this comic? Not quite. But it is unruly and uncensored. Rush likes his characters to say whatever they think. They never stop thinking, and they don't think only of their teeth. The man so keen on flossing also considers the fate of Africa, the end of the world and the many forms of human hell. The woman in *Mating* who is so proud of her gums also speaks several different languages even within English, inhabits different idioverses, as she would say: "What I was suddenly afraid of was that this moment was our perihelion, the closest we would ever approach or be, and that everything after this would transpire between bodies farther apart."

Reading Rush is like riding a rhetorical mystery train: You never know what register his characters will turn to next, and they often sound like a novelist allowing himself to talk. This is a risky procedure, and could lead to disaster. It doesn't, because the characters are defined by their intelligence and their compelling needs rather than by their linguistic consistency, but it does create the powerful sense of a gamble in each book. Are these people going to live up to the license given to their garrulous minds, and will the plot provide enough historical or material resistance to test or reconfigure these athletes of consciousness? The answer is yes, but the hovering question, fully settled only relatively late in each novel, is part of the reading pleasure.

The narrator of *Mating* is looking for love, although she is afraid she may just

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be looking for a man. Not just any man; a great man. This puts her in the position of the heroines of a number of famous novels, notably *Madame Bovary* and *Middlemarch*, but with two differences: She knows there is something retrograde about such a quest in the 1980s, and she finds her man. He is Nelson Denoon, a charismatic Irish-American inventor of remedies for underdevelopment, author of *Development as the Death of Villages* and founder of a utopian village community in the Kalahari where only women own land and vote. The novel recounts, in addition to most, maybe all, of what is going on in the narrator's head, her pursuit of Denoon; their ideally poised life together; a devastating conflict that arises in the women's village, provoked, it turns out, by a spy from a neighboring South African bantustan; Denoon's descent into spiritual passivity; and the narrator's return to America. She can live without him, but she can't escape the thought of his thoughts—he "filled the skies of my mind," she says at one point—and as the book ends she seems set to go back to Africa and Denoon.

In *Mortals* both she and Denoon, married now, appear briefly as guest lecturers in Gaborone. They have been working together in India, and Rush decides to finally tell us her name: Karen. The women's village in the Kalahari is doing well commercially because it sells a much-wanted tuber to the Germans. It's a sort of "German plantation"; it's "a little like a company town on the order of Hershey, Pennsylvania." This is not the Denoons' own description, but we are meant to imagine that this is not quite the utopia they had in mind.

There are other utopias, though, and other dreams of equality. "My utopia is equal love," the narrator of *Mating* says, "equal love between people of equal value." She wants to believe it is possible and she wants to know why it is so difficult. The narrator of *Mortals* is already inhabiting such a utopia, or thinks he is, and must learn that he isn't and then watch his world crumble. His male equivalent of Karen's bilateral project is this: "It came to him then that probably one of the best things, or at least one of the simplest good things, you could do with your mortal life would be to pick out one absolutely first-rate deserving person and do everything you could conceive of in the world to make her happy, as best you might." There are all kinds of tilts and spots of priggishness in this plan ("pick out," "first-rate," "deserving," "make her happy"), but it is not a despicable ideal, and Rush wants us to think about it not in opposition to the noise of history and politics but in combination with them. This is why Ray Finch, through whose consciousness everything that happens in the novel is filtered, is some sort of hero in spite of most appearances and much of his own history.

Ray is a CIA agent in Botswana whose cover is his job as an English teacher. He is something of a Milton scholar, so the cover is not all disguise, although Ray and Rush actually seem keener on Yeats, especially his poem "The Second Coming." Various incarnations of rough beasts move their slow thighs in these novels, and one of Ray's most brilliant bad jokes involves his pretending to misquote from "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death": "below" for "above," and "these clods" for "the clouds." "I know that I shall meet my fate/ Somewhere among these clods below."

Elsewhere he quotes the poem correctly, and makes the immediately following lines a motto for his relation to the United States and the agency: "Those that I fight I do not hate,/Those that I guard I do not love." Ray's wife, Iris, ten years younger than he is, is perfect if a little underoccupied. Ray celebrates her perfections

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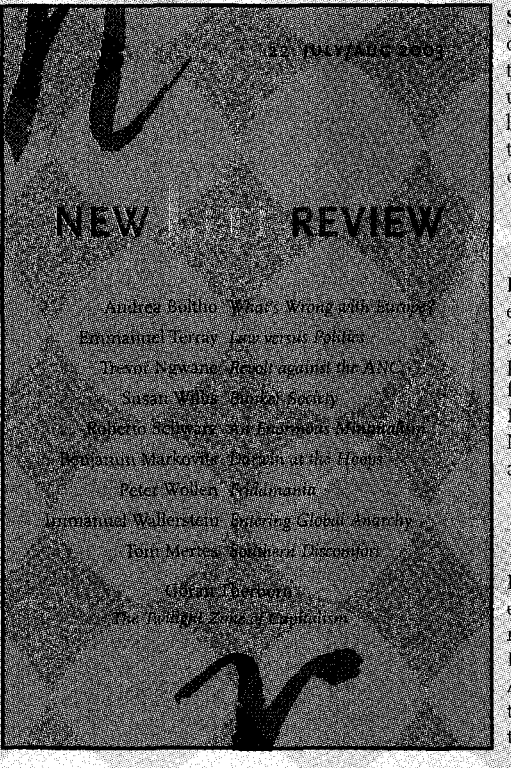
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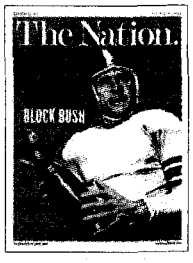

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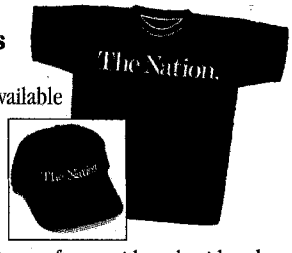

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endlessly—she is funny, beautiful, kind, courageous—but also begins to worry about a new sadness in her. She takes up with a black American doctor, first as her therapist and then as her lover. The doctor, Davis Morel, has come to Africa on a crusade—he wants to rid the place of Christianity, as a prelude to doing away with religion altogether. Religion, for Davis, is the enslavement or abdication of the will, a form of organized groveling. Ray calls him, in a sharp coinage, a "*panacean*," a person who has "a universal diagnosis for the world's ill." Ray is more of a pragmatist. "Of course something was wrong with the world, clearly. But what was wrong was hardly just one thing." Ray thinks of his work with the agency as containing harm rather than doing any, and he tries not to think of his colleagues' brutal work in other places, like Guatemala. The other player here is Ray's gay brother Rex, dying of AIDS in Oakland, who writes letters to Iris and finally entrusts to Ray his magnum opus, a book of anecdotes and epigrams called *Strange News*, or *Bright Cities Darken*.

For a while it looks as if the immense intellectual conversation among these four emblematic characters—spy, wife, black, gay—is all there is going to be. This would be pretty high-powered, but the air might get a little thin. But then another, physically only intermittently present, character takes on a leading role. He is Samuel Kerekang, an educated Botswanan who has ideas about the redistribution of income. He has organized a movement—ISA is its name, which means "to make happen"—that goes from symbolic acts of violence against cattle owners to open war in the desert against Boer-controlled paramilitaries operating out of Namibia—operating with the aid of the agency, needless to say, but until the very end without Ray's knowledge of his employer's involvement. Ray takes off in search of Kerekang, hoping to help him rather than hinder him, gets caught, beaten and imprisoned by the paramilitaries and is then joined in his confinement by Davis, who has come to look for him, at Iris's request. In the darkness of their prison they share their thoughts on Iris, Milton and much else, and Ray realizes fully that his old life is over, that he can never go back to what he and Iris were, or to where they were. "Iris had been his pope," he thinks, "or something like it. He had believed in Iris, in her goodness, her patience." Davis would say a man without a pope was free, and Ray himself, however painfully, comes to a similar conclusion as he starts his new life, along with Kerekang, as a schoolteacher and nothing else, in Mandela's South Africa. Both Ray and Davis turn out to be persons of terrific endurance and even nobility under stress, and the (temporary) defeat of the paramilitaries is the stirring stuff of old adventure stories. It would not be true to say there are no bad guys in Rush's fiction, but there are very few, and they are all on the margins of the moral action.

How are we to put all this together: Africa, the desert, progress, reaction, the agency, religion, love, marriage, fidelity, adultery, macho battling, male bonding, sibling rivalry, homosexuality, the absence of children except in school? This is "hardly just one thing," as Ray would say, but Rush is inviting us to think about the whole multiple package as if the parts had something to say to one another. Rush likes to fling out unresolved contradictions and tautologies and leave us hanging. "It could be done but it couldn't be done." "He hated Boyle, but not really." "He couldn't bear sitting down to eat with Iris because it reminded him of sitting down to eat with Iris." This is very effective, and suggests we have to hold things together in our heads in spite of ordinary logic rather than through it or because of it. But there is a larger logic, and we need to remember that Rush has a lot of "aesthetic cunning," after all, and offers plenty of patterns of connection.

The larger contradictory logic is about secrets and stories, about our ruined but not negligible hopes of getting rid of them. About the secrets Ray keeps from Iris, the secrets she helps him to keep, the secrets she keeps from him. About the stories everyone tells, about the need for lies and the need for truth. Ray says his work involves him in "an established lie," and one of his better throwaways tells a long tale: "He was not, himself, very good at games. He was very good at games no one knew he was playing." Davis, on the other hand, in Ray's view, wants to save people from "drowning in false narratives," but can he do that? Rex's bleak epigrams and commentaries help us here because in their literary way they work much as Ray imagines the agency working, in its ideal mode, in the world of politics: "bringing out into the light designs that...certain people wanted kept hidden." "Life is a sexually transmitted disease," Rex writes. "Life, passages of Sturm interrupted by sequences of Drang." "[I'll] be there for you," Rex says, means "that the promiser will lounge lovingly in the vicinity of the person who is in terrible trouble but without undertaking anything as concrete

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as lending money or driving him to the clinic from time to time." Hiding and bringing out into the light: That is what everyone in the novel is up to, and they are usually doing both things even when they imagine they are doing only one. At one point Ray gets dizzy over the phrase "false pretenses"—as if there were some other kind.

The truth is a version of utopia in *Mortals*, pictured as both available and unavailable, welcome and unwelcome, the object of all kinds of obscure longings and aversions. It won't set us free, but refusing it when we can have it may imprison us. It may be hell, as Ray repeatedly says, when he finds it lurking in his marriage and in the appalling conditions around him in the world. But even then, Rush is suggesting, in Africa, if you're white and perhaps if you're not, you want more. ■

Our Man in Jazz

GENE SANTORO

MYSELF AMONG OTHERS: A Life in Music.
By George Wein with Nate Chinen. Da Capo. 546 pp. $27.50.

Not many people can say they changed the world and make it stick. In *Myself Among Others: A Life in Music*, George Wein does. Without Wein, everything from Woodstock to Jazz at Lincoln Center might have happened differently—if it happened at all. For the 77-year-old impresario can justifiably claim to have invented, developed and codified the contemporary popular music festival.

It all began in 1954, with the first American jazz festival at Newport. Elaine Lorillard, one of the restless rich women who appear again and again throughout jazz history, showed up at Wein's Boston club, Storyville, with the idea of bringing jazz to the seaside-cottage elite. Wein plotted a festival that sought to merge the experience of discovery he'd had as a younger man wandering New York's jazz clubs with the music-intensive yet outdoor-vacation feel of Tanglewood, the well-heeled classical-music fest.

No one had assembled a multistar jazz program lasting several days before, so Wein was rolling dice with the gods of magnitude—though, characteristically, he hedged his bets. The financial risks belonged to his wealthy patrons, while he staked his ambitious future. Jazz was at a cyclical low in popularity: The swing era was over, and bebop, which put art before entertainment, had become the rage among musicians who, to noncultists, looked like junkies making noise. Yet Wein understood that the potential artistic and financial payoffs of putting on such a festival were considerable: By presenting a sweep of artists from Louis Armstrong to Dizzy Gillespie, it could reach a potential audience larger than any that jazz had seen since World War II.

Wein rolled seven: The festival drew national coverage and thousands of fans, and brought an economic windfall for local merchants. From then on, the pop music world assumed a new economic shape. Thanks largely to Wein, an indefatigable spider, jazz, folk, blues and soul-music festivals proliferated, first across America, then the planet. By the late 1950s he was setting up tours and doing bookings and weaving Europe and Japan into the circuit, all the while hatching more festivals, spinning the web of interests that sustains his musical empire even today. Summertime became big-money time for musicians nurtured by Wein's Festival Productions, like Armstrong, Gillespie, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, B.B. King and Ray Charles.

In 1960 Wein suffered his first significant setback when Charles Mingus masterminded a "rebel" festival in Newport to protest what he saw as Wein's favoring a handful of artists—a recurrent complaint. The staid Victorian resort erupted into riots by drunken collegians, prompting the town to shut down Wein's festival. It was one of his lowest points: Afterward he sat in his ground-floor Central Park West apartment and played one-handed Scrabble for months, trying to dope out his future.

This is one of the key Augustinian twists in Wein's generally well-paced and well-crafted memoir, which offers a pretty candid look at both the man and the Ur-promoter—though the two are not exactly separable. *Myself Among Others* traces how he got from an upper-middle-class home in Newton, Massachusetts, to Festival Productions, which annually runs some two dozen music festivals worldwide and has piloted countless others along the way, in the process mapping the logistics for all who followed. The book's engaging flow lets those who know Wein (I've covered his work for two decades) hear his nasal twang and deadpan delivery. Nate Chinen, Wein's ghostwriter, did his job. Although at times it devolves into lists—of stars who filled his festivals, of celebrities who crossed his peripatetic path—mostly it's entertaining, informative and spiked with eye-openers.

In the first third of the book, Wein evokes his childhood in Newton, highlighted by sports and the piano lessons provided by his proud secular Jewish parents. His father, Barney "Doc" Wein, was a dentist-turned-ear-nose-and-throat man who dropped $200 a week at the track and had a long affair with his divorcée secretary; his mother, Ruth, was a housewife whose family owned Ginsburg Brothers Paper Products, which paid her annual dividends of several thousand dollars even through the Depression. Along the way, Wein touches on his World War II Army hitch ("I hated every minute"), where he sidled into a band, and voices both his discontent at returning to pre-med courses at his father's insistence and his joy at rediscovering jazz, now transformed by bebop. In 1950 his story shifts into higher gear: He opened Storyville, which presented jazz and some comedy and folk music, and met Elaine Lorillard, an encounter that changed his life, and music history.

He also met Joyce Alexander, a young middle-class black woman, whom he began dating. Despite his parents' initially furious objections, the pair gradually fell in love and lived together for years before they eloped in 1959; after several more confrontational months, his parents finally accepted their marriage. Joyce is portrayed as George's indispensable sounding board, editor, general factotum, diplomat, chief cook and stalwart sharer of his belief that jazz could help individuals transcend race and class—a belief, Wein says, that underlay the Newport conception, as well as his life.

Wein started out as an idealistic fan-musician—a devoted if mediocre pianist, he led his first jazz combo at 15—so for Storyville he booked the best: Armstrong, Ellington, Fitzgerald, Vaughan, Art Tatum, Sidney Bechet, Erroll Garner, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington. He

Gene Santoro's latest book is Myself When I Am Real: The Life and Music of Charles Mingus *(Oxford).*

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was shocked by commercial reality: His club frequently didn't fill (even for Ellington), and to most musicians he was simply The Man. And so he adapted—the book's central theme. At Newport he learned to deal with the bruising one-two punch of rich patrons (an expertise he was later the first to adapt to corporate sponsors) and local politics (festivals proffered financial benefits against the dislocations and expenses trailing hordes of music fans). He rapidly made musical friends and allies like John Hammond, Nat Hentoff, Nesuhi Ertegun and Pete Seeger, with whom he masterminded the Newport Folk Festival. He impressed black celebrities like James Baldwin and Bill Cosby. (In the book's foreword, Cosby writes with truth, "George would've tagged out Ty Cobb at second base with Cobb's spikes in his chest. George ain't afraid.") His success brought him recognition: He was feted at the White House twice.

Memoirs are often occasions for delicious score-settling, and this one doesn't disappoint. Wein rips the town of Newport, placing the blame for the 1960 riots that almost destroyed him on greedy saloonkeepers, blinkered local officials and lackadaisical police. He scorns rock culture, which nearly capsized him a decade later, when jazz hit another commercial low. In 1971, the Newport Jazz Festival presented the Allman Brothers Band, whose album *Live at the Fillmore East* lured post-Woodstock thousands Wein characterizes as "maniacs"; he observes bitterly, "It was like observing lemurs at the zoo; they were zonked." They pushed down his fences while the town shrugged. The following year, the Newport Jazz Festival moved to New York City.

Among many personal paybacks, some inevitably self-serving, Wein drolly skewers the widely disliked and feared Albert Grossman, who managed Peter, Paul, and Mary, Bob Dylan and Janis Joplin. When Grossman moved from Chicago, he crashed for months at the Weins' West Side apartment; they would all too often come home to find him smoking a hookah pipe and be awakened nightly by phone calls from his shadowy creditors. One of the triumvirate behind the Newport Folk Festival, Grossman, the cutthroat businessman-thug, figures alongside Seeger, the determined idealist, as a foil for Wein, the pragmatist seeking to translate art into paying entertainment to sustain art, fighting an ongoing battle with varying success to keep up with audience tastes and musical trends. In this context, it's revealing that only Pete and Toshi Seeger join Joyce among the book's dedicatees.

Ideals aside, the pragmatist had more commercial lives than a cat. Despite trying to lure young rock and blues fans to his festivals, by the early 1970s Wein was deep in debt, thanks to jazz's market erosion. In the mid-1970s he teamed with Kool cigarettes, becoming the first to tap deep corporate pockets for pop-music presentations. Kool sponsored a nationwide string of jazz fests, targeted mostly at black audiences, that featured as much soul music as jazz. They made Wein rich even as (overwhelmingly white) jazz fans and critics cried betrayal—although today that same stylistic mix predominates in Harlem, DC and Oakland clubs. By 1980, with Kool buoying Festival Productions, Wein's annual salary was $100,000 (not including perks like travel and expenses); he wasn't, he insists, rich until Kool bought the Newport name that year for $1.3 million.

Wein's Seegeresque sides shine through the Newport Folk Festival and its nonprofit cousin, the widely beloved New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. The Crescent City fest's "local" stages host a wealth of regional talent often unheard beyond Louisiana and Texas, enhanced by indigenous food and folklore, and its foundation doles out money locally. The racial twists of its history are especially fascinating. In 1962, approached by city fathers about a jazz festival in the pre–Civil Rights Act South, Wein observed dryly, "You know, Duke Ellington is accustomed to being treated as royalty wherever he goes. He stays in the finest hotels. But I understand that your hotels are segregated and will not accept blacks as guests." He noted that many jazz bands were integrated. The city fathers agreed the time was not yet ripe for a New Orleans jazz festival. In 1968 they came back to him, discovered his wife was black, and instead hired Wein's former colleague Willis Conover.

A year later, they came back yet again—

IMMORTALITY

There are killer weeds, deep in the flower patch,
down at the bottom of the tombstone.
Only they'll seem to breed out of the ground itself.

Even when new earth is put in,
or the old earth removed, the killer weeds return once more.
It must have something to do, I think,

with the very nature of the cemetery.
For we'll see it happening all of the time,
the impatiens or the pansies or the alyssum—

all are eaten away, finally, by the killer weeds…
"They'll suck the life out of everything," my sister
tells me, now we'll stand before our parents' grave.

"See how they'll wrap themselves about each green stem
of each new sheet. And spring or summer it is the same.
Perhaps begonias would survive, or maybe

the Gate of Heaven people could tend it for us…
I try," says my sister, "I try and try," late at noon,
as together we'll peer at the gnarled dates on the tombstone.

"Every Sunday, and then twice during the week,
I try, and I destroy, and yet what is the use?…
The killer weeds just never die."

Robert Mazzocco

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a sweet triumph that allowed Wein to radically reconceive the festival. "After Woodstock," he writes, "it had become clear to me that young people would no longer sit in reserved seats at an outdoor concert event. They wanted the freedom to move around and be part of what was happening." It was set at a racetrack. This concept has made the New Orleans Jazz Festival Wein's most enduring success. But in 1977, it came under attack by black activists, who threatened, "We're going to force you to take more blacks on to the board of directors. You have been ripping off black culture." Wein's characteristic response: "You can't force us to do what we want to do in the first place." The infusion of new blood created dissension and power struggles on his board that took years to work out. But he stuck with it.

At heart, The Man remained a Fan. His psychological acuity with musicians is demonstrated in backstage anecdotes. Famously crusty Art Tatum fondly played requests for Joyce and George at Storyville after hours. Unlike most promoters, Wein handled the eccentric Monk straightforwardly, like a rational adult, and got results: One night, after yelling at him to get onstage, Wein was aghast at the "payback" set, a forty-five-minute drum solo; he confronted Monk and explained, "I had to run up and down those stairs six times to get you on the stage and I'm getting too old and fat to do that." "Then I don't blame you for yelling at me," said the famously difficult pianist, who never repeated the behavior.

A rare impresario, Wein also learned to get the best from his artists by limiting his role to business and not trying to dictate their creative choices—about what material they'd perform at his shows, for instance. When he planned a 1957 Newport all-star gala in Armstrong's honor with manager Joe Glaser, Satchmo, vehement about controlling his sets, blew it off onstage. When he told Gillespie not to "clown" at the 1954 festival because he was afraid of critics' reactions, the quickwitted trumpeter dissed him for years. And there are revealing, often funny backstage moments with everyone from Ellington to Davis.

As it winds through Wein's complicated life, this memoir unveils his complexity: his stubborn convictions, his pugnacious diplomacy, his financial and psychological savvy. Take, for example, his thick-skinned reaction to criticism. Many jazz critics, including yours truly, have sharpened their claws on him only to be invited to discuss, if not resolve, differences. Or take his sense of loyalty: He boasts that all key Festival Productions staffers have been in place for twenty to fifty years. That toughness and generosity lighten his book's most memorable moments.

There are two words in "music business," musicians like to say, implicitly complaining about the inequalities between them. In music history, George Wein's virtues reside in how he consistently tried to make those two words harmonize. *Myself Among Others* invaluably documents how and why. ■

EVENTS

MASSACHUSETTS

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■ *Rethinking Marxism* announces its fifth international gala celebration of the Marxian tradition: "Marxism and the World Stage." At a time of deepening international exchanges and intimidations, Marxism is flourishing as a unifying ground for those seeking a just and sustainable world. The conference will take place at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, November 6–9. The deadline for papers is September 15. For more information please go to www.marxismandtheworldstage.org.

NEW YORK

The Weather Underground

■ *The Weather Underground*, an award-winning feature documentary about the radicals who tried to make a revolution and landed on the FBI's Most Wanted list, is screening at New York City's Film Forum, (212) 727-8110, www.filmforum.com, and comes to theaters nationwide this summer.

NATIONAL

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■ War and Global Capitalism. Unemployment and Recession. For speakers and resources on these and related topics, contact Economy Connection, a project of the Union for Radical Political Economics. We can provide speakers for formal or informal events sponsored by community groups, unions, high schools, colleges or political organizations. Our speakers can talk about wealth and poverty, and the economic forces that generate increasing income inequality, among and within countries. Contact us at soapbox@comcast.net or (201) 792-7459.

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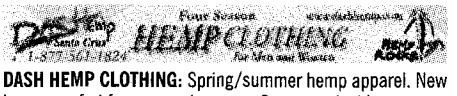

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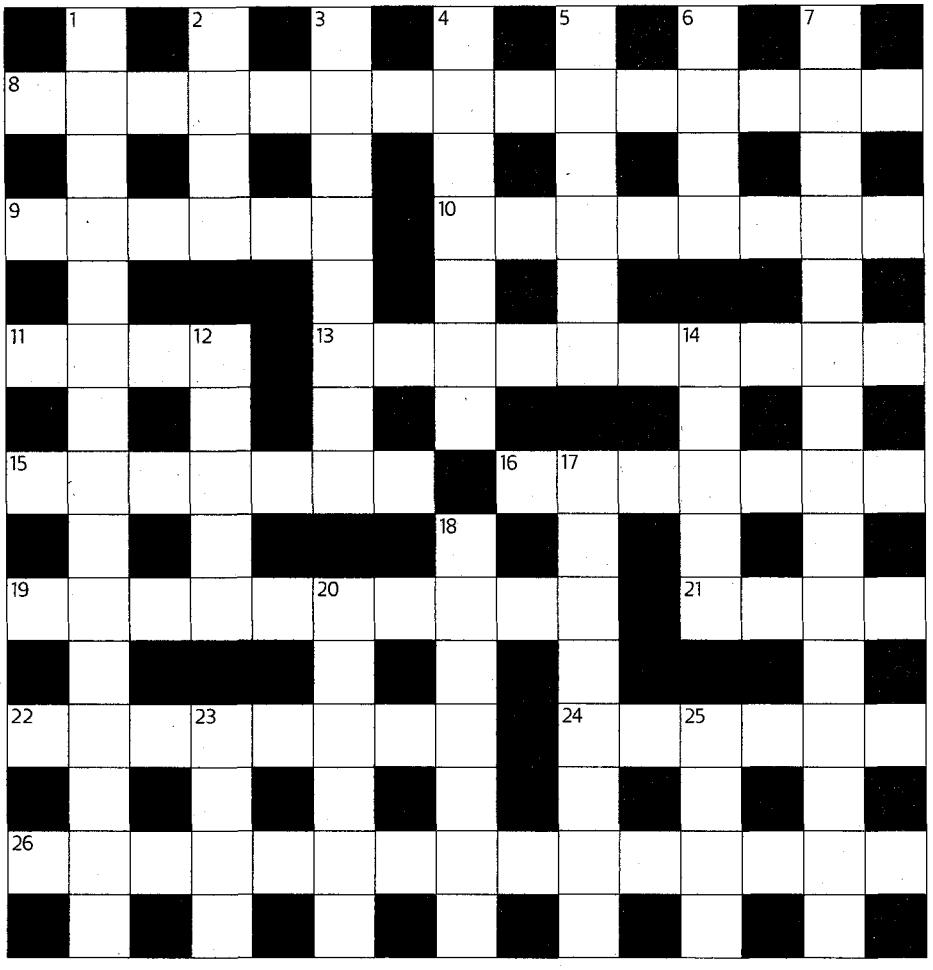

ACROSS

8 The laundry may have been done at one time. (So one leaves the ship in a hurry if one is!) (6,9)

9 One runs rather steadily, and purposefully—perhaps as a reminder. (6)

10 This is rather awkward to be placed around the sort of lick, which is tricky! (8)

11 The beginnings of a scholar—Sholem, for instance. (4)

13 One hears the plank is rather rigid when one is not interested—and fed up with the whole thing! (5,5)

15 It's possibly true when you get angry about it, even though well along in years. (7)

16 I beg you to do it—and show the customs and traditions of little mischief-makers! (7)

19 Certain prevaricators are, in truth—but one may be carried along with them, if incapacitated. (10)

21 See 25 down

22 A successful season for the "rubber man." (8)

24 Like the complex study of numbers, this could take your breath away. (6)

26 Famous verses that one hears as things worshiped by royalty. (6,2,3,4)

DOWN

1 "Et tu, Brute!" for example. (6,4,5)

2 What flycatchers are said to do with rough matted hair. (4)

3 Can get around a rocky road, being so cute. (8)

4 Miss Gardner, the sort of star appearing incarnate. (7)

5 Threw the shoulders back, when told to do so by a superior cadet—as timbers might be. (6)

6 Is the purpose to have a log chopped up? (4)

7 Notices in the papers obtained by money—"done" by the sound of it. (5,3,7)

12 See 23

14 It could be a lust for city life here, OK? (5)

17 Bound to have a pain with what might be over the lip? (8)

18 What Gorgon was able to do to you—proving not only modern music lovers might turn to rock! (7)

20 What one is supposed to say when they shoot you. (6)

23 and **12** Where some girls play, and possessively play. (9)

25 and **21** across Remove whatever order might be in England this way? (4,4)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, *The Nation*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/print/hints.

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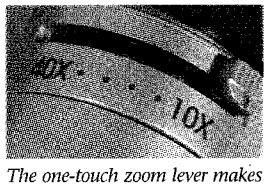

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